TAI-PAN

TAI-PAN

A Romance of the South China Seas

Screenplay by

CARL FOREMAN

From The Novel By

JAMES CLAVELL

Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd.,
Lot 220, Clear Water Bay Road,
Kowloon, Hong Kong.
And
Palladium Pictures, Inc.,
1251 Avenue of the Americas,
New York, N.Y. 10020

First Draft Screenplay
February 15, 1976

For budget purposes, all scenes and sequences involving process, traveling or painted mattes, models, miniatures, and other special effects, will be indicated by the use of three asterisks: ***

FADE IN:

1 CLOSEUP - A NINETEENTH CENTURY OIL PAINTING OF THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

It fills the screen, all actions fully detailed. The painted guns belch out fire and smoke.

A superimposed title appears. It reads:

TRAFALGAR - 1805

O.S., close and ear-splitting, a cannon fires.

2 CLOSEUP - AN ACTUAL SHIP'S CANNON

It fires directly into camera.

The view widens to include the grimy, sweaty gun crew. The Chief Gunner turns and bawls:

CHIEF GUNNER
Powder monkey -- ! Powder monkey -- ! Dirk Struan, where the hell are you, God damn ye!

3 INT. PASSAGEWAY

leading from the powder magazine to the gun decks. Little Dirk Struan, no more than seven years old, his soot-blackened face streaked with sweat and tears, sick and frightened, gropes up the dark tunnel with a keg of powder in his arms and another tied to his back.

LITTLE DIRK
Coming, sir -- coming -- !

He shouts again, but his voice is obliterated by the thunder of cannon fire.

4 CLOSEUP - A WATERCOLOR MAP OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

in the Chinese style, delicate, simple.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

Superimposed title:

THE INDIAN OCEAN - 1814

5 EXT. OCEAN - DAY ***

A British merchantman, the Vagrant Star, sails on a calm sea.

6 EXT. DECK - VAGRANT STAR - DAY

Young Dirk Struan, aged sixteen and tied to the rigging, is being lashed by the Bosun, as the Crew look on. The Bosun, not enjoying it, looks up questioningly toward the quarter-deck. The view widens to include the quarter-deck and third mate, Tyler Brock, standing there.

BROCK
(calling down, pleasantly)
Struan -- this is being done for thine own good...Three more, Bosun -- !

Deliberately, he nods for the Seaman to continue the whipping. Scowling, the Bosun turns and lashes young Dirk again.

7 YOUNG DIRK

as he takes the agonizing cut, holds back a scream of pain, and then looks up toward Brock with a hatred that will never die.

8 EXT. BRIDGE - VAGRANT STAR - NIGHT - BROCK

is pacing the bridge alone, enjoying the calm night. Behind him, young Dirk climbs silently up to the bridge, a knife ready in his hand, his back still a mass of raw stripes. He starts toward Brock, but Brock hears him, whirls, sees him, draws his own knife. For a moment they are poised for a death struggle, the boy afraid but determined, Brock grinning with anticipation. Then they are no longer alone. The Bosun and some of the crew climb onto the bridge, and grab Dirk. Brock is disappointed, but takes second best.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

BROCK
What's it to be then, young Struan, a hanging or another whipping?

BOSUN
(firmly)
There'll be no hanging, Mate. And the lad's had enough whipping to last him his whole life....

Brock looks at the unforgiving Boy, then at the grim faces of the Sailors, and gives in.

9 A WATERCOLOR MAP OF THE CHINA SEA

in the same style, showing the coast of China, and including Canton, Peking, Chusan, Macao and Hong Kong. The superimposed title reads:

THE CHINA SEA - 1830

10 EXT. SEA - DAY ***

Two graceful China clippers -- the China Cloud and the Scarlet Witch -- are racing before a stiff breeze. The China Cloud flies a proud flag: a red lion entwined with a green dragon.

11 thru 21 RACE SEQUENCE ***

to be designed, its thrust: excitement and beauty. Blue skies, blue sea, white sails, the clean, lithe lines of the clippers, the rushing waters, the swift winds, the chase. We see fully-grown Dirk Struan, captain and owner of the China Cloud, and Tyler Brock, captain and owner of the Scarlet Witch, on the bridges of their respective ships. They compete ruthlessly, recklessly, driving themselves, their crews and their ships to the limit. Then, under Dirk's seamanship, the China Cloud leaves the Scarlet Witch behind. Dirk's mate, Orlov, a giant of a man worth his weight in gold, is a great help to him in this encounter; we will meet Orlov again. And defeat turns into disaster for Brock: a section of sail gives way and a length of loose rigging snaps around like a whiplash into his left eye, destroying it forever. Brock reels, his hand going to his blinded eye and coming away wet with blood.

(CONTINUED)

11 thru 21 CONTINUED:

BROCK
(hoarsely)
Struan -- Struan -- !

It is a promise to kill.

22 SPLIT SCREEN WITH TWO PANELS

with held frames in each. In one, Dirk, unaware of Brock's injury, faces into the wind, exulting in the excitement of the race and victory; in the other, blood welling from the socket of his ruined eye, Brock glares out toward Dirk and the China Cloud, his face a mask of pain, rage and hatred. Over this, a title appears:

THE EARLY AND MIDDLE NINETEENTH CENTURY WAS A TIME WHEN SOME NATIONS AND SOME MEN WERE ABLE TO CARVE OUT, TO SEIZE, AND THEN TO HOLD AGAINST ALL COMERS, VAST EMPIRES AND IMMEASURABLE RICHES.

TAI-PAN IS A STORY OF THAT TIME, AND SUCH MEN....

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

23 EXT. CANTON BACK STREET - NIGHT

A mean, filthy alley, dimly lit by the lanterns of doubtful taverns and grimy brothels, peopled by beggars, thieves, and furtive shadows. Three ragged Chinese come into view and toward camera, one of them more than six feet tall, the second of average height but strong and bulky, the third slight in figure, a boy. Their wide-brimmed hats hide their faces, but they carry knives at their belts.

A superimposed title comes up briefly:

DREAM STREET
CANTON, CHINA - JANUARY 1840

As it fades, the three Men come to a doorway. They knock. At the same time, there is the sound of heavily shod feet, and a squad of Armed Soldiers appears at the top of the

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

street. Dream Street empties prudently and fearfully. The three Men in the doorway go tense, knock again urgently. The menacing figures of the Soldiers come nearer. At last, the door opens, and they slip inside.

24 INT. OPIUM HOUSE - NIGHT

In the entrance, the three Men are met by the fat, grinning Overseer. By the light of a lantern, it can be seen now that the tallest of the three is Dirk Struan, but the faces of the other two are still obscured. The Overseer leads them inside.

25 thru 27 SERIES OF SHOTS

of different rooms in the opium house, as the Overseer leads Dirk and the two others through the rancid rabbit warren. Dirk sees the results of addiction, as the group passes among the figures lying on pallets and narrow bunks, women and children as well as men, emaciated, prematurely aged, all in various stages of self-induced slow death. He is shocked and revolted by the stench, the misery, the degradation, the sheer mindless horror.

28 CLOSEUP - AN OPIUM PIPE

and the full process of making the sticky black gum ready for smoking. Then the view widens, as the Overseer takes the pipe from the skeleton-like hands of the Addict who is about to smoke it, and hands it with a giggle to Dirk. Dirk flicks the man's hand away with revulsion.

29 EXT. CANTON ENGLISH SETTLEMENT GARDEN - NIGHT - FULL SHOT

In the light of its torches, the broad, beautifully landscaped wall-enclosed garden makes an ironic contrast to the opium house. Dirk and his companions go toward the large, three-story mansion that flies the flag of the Noble House.

30 CLOSER - DIRK AND THE TWO CHINESE

At the entrance to the mansion, Dirk turns to the taller of the two men, and speaks to him in pidgin English.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

DIRK
All finish now, Fong. You take chow.

Fong bows and leaves them. Dirk and the boy go on toward the house.

31 INT. DIRK'S CANTON OFFICE - NIGHT

Dirk and the boy are walking across an imposing and spacious room. Kegs of cognac, whisky and rum line one wall, and tiers of books and ledgers another. There are paintings hung wherever possible, landscapes of Macao and China, portraits, ships of the Noble House fleet, glass-fronted cabinets with pewter mugs and silver tankards, racks of cutlasses and muskets, and a gargantuan partners' desk, situated under a large stylized painting of a lion and dragon.

32 INT. GREAT DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dirk and the boy are moving across a vast room with a huge fireplace warming the marble floor and walls, and a great table capable of seating forty in the carved chairs that surround it, sumptuously furnished and set off by Chinese silk hangings, paintings, and lacquered tables holding giant Ming teak dragons and model ships, altogether a final and complete contrast to the opium house in Dream Street, and the shabby, dirty clothing worn by Dirk and his companion, as they walk silently through it.

Dirk comes to a sudden stop in the center of the room, lost in thought. The boy looks up at him, then removes "his" wide-brimmed hat, and as her long, glossy black hair falls down past her shoulders, we see beneath the dirt and grime a tall and beautiful Chinese girl. She looks up at him, half sardonic, half in sympathy.

MAY-MAY
So now you know.

DIRK
Yes.

MAY-MAY
I think you find it unpleasurable.

Dirk corrects her mechanically; it is something he still has to do from time to time, although she has been an apt student.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Unpleasant.

He goes out. She looks after him shrewdly, but with love.

33 INT. DIRK'S BATHROOM - CANTON - NIGHT

Even Dirk is almost dwarfed in the great enameled tub. He soaks, lost in morose thought. May-May comes in, wearing a short silk robe, her translucent white skin scrubbed and clean now. She comes behind him, kneels and begins to soap his back and shoulders gently, and in silence. The scars of his whipping at Brock's command are pale now but still visible. Looking at them, she covers them with soapy water. The water falls away, and the scars remain.

MAY-MAY
(finally)
You are thinking of the opium house, Tai-Pan?...Are you wondering how people can destroy themselves for a pipeful of dreams?

Dirk is silent.

MAY-MAY
But other people become rich, the ones who sell the dreams....

He remains silent. Then:

DIRK
You're not to come here anymore, May-May. It isn't safe. When I go to Hong Kong tomorrow, you'll go on home to Macao and stay there.

She does not argue.

34 A SEDAN CHAIR

bears down on camera. Then the scene enlarges to include the EXT. of a crowded CANTON STREET - DAY. Unlike some others moving in the street, this chair is curtained and bears no identifying insignia or crest. The bearers are strong and capable, and four armed and burly linkmen, two before and two behind, move with them on the trot, through the busy street.

35 INT. CURTAINED SEDAN CHAIR - DAY

Dirk is in the chair, peering out through a slit in the curtains, alert, ready for trouble. He wears a blue frock coat with silver buttons, skin-tight white trousers tucked into his seaboots, and a knife at his waist and one tucked into his right boot.

36 EXT. CANTON STREET - DAY

Dirk's sedan chair continues to breast the current. Then, suddenly, all traffic stops and Soldiers run into the street. Everything and everybody gives way. A Herald follows the Soldiers, all self-importance.

A sub-title translates his announcement in Chinese:

HERALD
Make way for the great and noble Mandarin, cousin to the Emperor himself, Ti-Sen...!

The crowd obeys. Dirk's chair stops with all the others. Ti-Sen's retinue trots into the street, followed by the Mandarin, himself, in his over-sized sedan chair, its side curtains open.

37 CLOSER ON TI-SEN

so that we will remember him, a very large, very fat, richly dressed man, secure in his birth and place, his sedan chair carried by four stalwart and handsome Amazons. In all his glory, Ti-Sen and his company proceed through the street.

38 DIRK

in his sedan chair, he observes the passage of Ti-Sen and his women bearers through the slit in the curtains.

39 INT. RECEPTION ROOM IN JIN-QUA'S HOUSE - CANTON - DAY

Richly furnished in the Chinese fashion, the room of an immensely wealthy man. Following a Chinese manservant, Dirk comes in. The view widens to include Jin-Qua, ancient, fragile, tiny, his skin like parchment, his grey beard thin and wispy. Dirk comes to the old man perched in his great chair and bows respectfully, and Servants begin to serve wine and dim sum. The two men speak in pidgin English, using descriptive gestures freely, as necessary.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Servant say Canton number one merchant Jin-Qua feel all same werry good. I werry glad, Jin-Qua.

JIN-QUA
I werry glad also.

He smiles at his small joke.

JIN-QUA
All same, if Tai-Pan also want feel werry good, werry bad walk-about night time.

DIRK
(surprised)
How Jin-Qua know this?

JIN-QUA
(bland)
Some fella see, some fella tell, never mind.
(slyly)
Tai-Pan smokee opium now?

DIRK
Never.

With his chopsticks, Jin-Qua begins to serve dim sum to Dirk. The old man is enjoying his little display of private knowledge.

JIN-QUA
All same, law say no cow slave in white barbarian settlement. Tai-Pan know this.

DIRK
(bland, in turn)
May-May no slave. I make her free same day you sell her me. Jin-Qua know this.

JIN-QUA
(annoyed)
All same, law say no woman no kind walkabout white devil settlement.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
All same bad law. When British have Hong Kong, no more bad law, no more settlement, never mind.

In his growing anger, Jin-Qua leans forward in his chair, his gnarled forefinger emphasizing his points.

JIN-QUA
British no can have Hong Kong. Canton merchants will not have. Mandarins will not have! Emperor will not have, never!

Dirk smiles grimly.

DIRK
Will have, never mind.

Jin-Qua sits back and studies him, frowning.

JIN-QUA
Why you come my house?

DIRK
I go Hong Kong this day for big talk-talk Honorable Mr. Longstaff. I come wish Jin-Qua all same good joss. Jin-Qua all same father to me when I be young bull. I not forget, never.

JIN-QUA
(mollified)
All same Tai-Pan show good face. Maybe that why Noble House have strong joss all time.

Dirk rises, bows, and starts out.

JIN-QUA
Tai-Pan...
(Dirk stops, turns to him)
Mandarins big price have on Tai-Pan head. Tai-Pan look up, look down, look behind, all time, you hear?

DIRK
I hear.

There is an o.s. sound like a thunder clap.

40 A TOPSAIL CLAPS IN A STIFF BREEZE - DAY

The camera pulls back and high to show us the gleaming white clipper, Flying Cloud, the flag of the Noble House fluttering at its mizzen, skimming the dark blue sea. Far ahead, Hong Kong island lies, still too far away to reveal anything more than its dun-colored hills. The sky is as blue as the sea, the clouds as white as the slim, swift ship, the air as clear and fresh as if this were the dawn of time, for steamships have yet to come to the China seas. Dirk and May-May are small but recognizable on the bridge.

41 EXT. BRIDGE - FLYING CLOUD - DAY

on Dirk and May-May, arm in arm and facing the breeze, looking out toward the distant island.

MAY-MAY
You really got to have that little stinky rock there?

DIRK
Yes...There's no other way to get free of the mandarins. All we're doing here is working for them, making them rich or richer...
(he thinks about it)
But it's more than trade. That island's mine. I belong there. I've been traveling to it, heading for it, all my life.

42 EXT. BEACH - HONG KONG - DAY - BEGINNING OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

Dirk, standing by the dinghy which he has rowed to the island, is all alone on the deserted, windswept beach, looking up at the untouched hills. He starts up toward them.

DIRK'S VOICE
The very first time I set foot on it, I knew. I could feel it in my bones.

43 thru 45 SERIES OF SHOTS of Dirk, making his solitary, almost enchanted way up into the hills.

46 EXT. KNOLL - HONG KONG - DAY

Dirk walks out onto the crest of the knoll, tasting the breeze. He looks around.

DIRK'S VOICE
I know exactly where our house is going to be. I'm going to build a palace there.

47 PANORAMIC SHOT ***

of the harbor, the sea, the mainland, and the island below, as Dirk sees them.

MAY-MAY-S VOICE
Well, I tell you what, then. If you're going to build me a house on that poky little rock, we just better make damn sure we have a damn good feng-shui.

END OF FLASHBACK.

48 RESUME 41

DIRK
Feng-shui. What the hell kind of Christian are you, talking about house gods and evil spirits?

MAY-MAY
I'm a fantastical good Christian, Tai-Pan.

DIRK
Fantastic.

MAY-MAY
That's right. But careful, too.
(she shivers)
Can we go inside now, please?

49 THE FLYING CLOUD - DAY

as seen approaching through a telescope, small in the distance.

50 EXT. BRIDGE - DANCING WITCH AT ANCHOR IN HARBOR - DAY

His empty eye-socket covered with a black eye-patch, as physically powerful as ever, Tyler Brock and his son, Gorth, are at the rail. Gorth, very tall and strong for his twenty-four years, is looking through the glass. He is much like Brock but impatient, frustrated, unloved and unloving.

GORTH
Here comes the bastard now.

Grimly amused, Brock reaches for the telescope.

BROCK
Don't never let him hear thee call him that, my son. At least, not till both of thee are much older, him particular.

Gorth is not amused.

BROCK
Any road, he's mine. I'll have him, when the time comes.

GORTH
(striking back)
So you say.

Brock looks at him sharply, starts to retort, then deliberately reaches out, takes a handful of Gorth's back hair, and twists it. The pain brings tears to Gorth's eyes, but he grits his teeth and keeps silent.

BROCK
Thy's hair too long, boy. Trim it.

51 HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY - MED. FULL SHOT ***

with the Dancing Witch, Brock and Gorth on the bridge, in the f.g. In the bay beyond her, there is a scattering of Chinese junks and sampans, a British frigate, and several merchant ships, one of them of Dirk's fleet, the White Cloud. A naval cutter has left the frigate and is nearing the shore, from which the barren, rocky island rises to the knoll which dominates the harbor and the small, down-at-the-heels Chinese fishing village that is the only settlement the island boasts.

52 EXT. THE MOVING CUTTER - DAY

H. E. the Honorable William Longstaff, accompanied by his young secretary, Horatio Sinclair, and escorted by Captain Glessing of the Royal Navy, is being rowed ashore. Longstaff sees Glessing look back toward the still distant Flying Cloud, and then turn away with a frown.

LONGSTAFF
Oh, come, come, Captain Glessing, that scowling face of yours will make me positively seasick.

GLESSING
Sorry, Your Excellency. But being kept waiting by this fellow makes my gorge rise.

LONGSTAFF
Dirk Struan is not a 'fellow', Captain. Always remember, he's the Tai-Pan of the Noble House.

GLESSING
Whatever that means, anywhere but out here.

LONGSTAFF
(with asperity)
Except that we <u>are</u> out here, and if you're going to serve <u>out here</u>, sir, you must learn what they're about, out here, and that includes the Chinese, as well. The Tai-Pan says so, and he's entirely correct. You may have contempt for merchants and traders, sir, but please to remember that the flag follows trade, or vice versa, however it goes.

GLESSING
Sorry, Excellency. I'm sure you're right.

Horatio is amused by his discomfiture, Longstaff mollified.

LONGSTAFF
Accepted. After all, everyone must learn in the beginning.

GLESSING
(grimly)
Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

They have reached the shore, and British sailors already there are wading out. Longstaff steps forward to be carried to the beach.

LONGSTAFF
Fill him in a bit, will you, Horatio?

He is whisked away. Straight-faced, Horatio begins.

HORATIO
To begin with, Tai-Pan means master, Captain --

GLESSING
(now that Longstaff is gone)
Master, indeed. That's bloody shit, Sinclair.

HORATIO
Not out here, Captain. However, make it supreme leader, if you like, the very first in rank. And the Noble House is the Chinese name for Struan and Co., the richest private company on the China Seas. Dirk Struan came out here as a boy and today he's extremely powerful and knowledgeable ---

Glessing nods and waves him forward into the arms of the waiting seamen. Sinclair, whisked away, calls back over his shoulder.

HORATIO
And he's been of great help to His Excellency...!

GLESSING
Yes, I know. And to the Noble House as well, no doubt.

53 CLOSEUP - THE NOBLE HOUSE FLAG - DAY

flying on a ship, the camera moving down swiftly to pass a name-plate on the bridge reading "China Cloud," and then to hold ROBB STRUAN and his wife, SARAH, as she follows Robb to the gangplank. Her prematurely lined, once attractive face is almost pretty again in the passion of her urgency. Robb is an older, slighter, weaker version of his brother, Dirk.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

SARAH
You will tell him, Robb! Today -- !

ROBB
(unhappily)
Yes, after the meeting.

SARAH
You promised...!

ROBB
Yes, yes, I promised.

He hurries down the gangplank. The camera pans over to another ship, the Yankee Trader, where two Men and two Women are on the bridge, one of the Women looking off through a telescope at Dirk's ship, now at anchor some distance out in the harbor.

54 EXT. BRIDGE - YANKEE TRADER - DAY

on Samuel Tillman, Jeff Cooper, Mary Sinclair, a quietly pretty girl, and Shevaun Tillman, who is looking through the telescope. Tillman, Shevaun and Cooper are American.

SHEVAUN
Damn it, where is he? Everyone's going ashore, and he's not even on deck yet. I want to see him.

She lowers the glass, a strikingly beautiful girl, red-haired, green-eyed, now prettily frustrated. They look at her indulgently. Mary is dressed well, if modestly and provincially, but Shevaun is in something that obviously came from Paris or New York. If Mary is a wren, Shevaun is a scarlet tanager, both nineteen or twenty.

TILLMAN
You'll see him in Macao, Shevaun. Come on, Jeff.

SHEVAUN
I want to see him now, Uncle Samuel. I'm dying to see that magnificent joss of his everyone keeps talking about, whatever it is.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

The men and Mary are amused, but for different reasons. Jeff thinks Shevaun is being adorably naive, but Mary knows that Shevaun is not without guile.

SHEVAUN
Have I said something funny? Mary, just because you've lived out here all your life, you mustn't be condescending and superior, like them.

TILLMAN
Joss isn't something you can actually see, my dear, only its results. To the Chinese, joss means luck and fate and destiny and God and the devil, all combined, wouldn't you say, Jeff?

Shevaun is looking through the telescope again.

COOPER
Yes. It's very real to them, anyway, and certainly Struan has enjoyed great good fortune for years now.
(he becomes aware that Shevaun isn't listening)
Shevaun, you're not listening --
(he begins to catch on, and Mary's face confirms his suspicions)
I think she's joshing us! I believe she knows all about it.

MARY
She should. I explained it to her last night.

SHEVAUN
(putting the glass down, unembarrassed)
You're a rotten traitor. Anyway, I don't think I want to wait until we get to Macao. Mary and I are going ashore with you.

TILLMAN
You are not! You know we have a meeting with the High Commissioner.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

SHEVAUN
Of course. We'll just stroll along the beach until you're finished. Then you can introduce me to the Tai-Pan.

Tillman looks at Cooper and Mary for support, doesn't find it, and carries on alone.

TILLMAN
You will not walk along the beach -- only prostitutes do that. And I will not introduce you. It's not at all necessary for you to meet Struan today.

MARY
(diplomatically)
Mr. Tillman -- perhaps you'll allow one of your officers to escort us?

SHEVAUN
Clever girl!

TILLMAN
No. I will not introduce you to Mr. Struan today.

SHEVAUN
Then Jeff will, won't you?

She gives him the full battery of her charm, and Cooper succumbs happily.

COOPER
Yes, but you must have an escort.

SHEVAUN
Anyone! Come on, Mary ---

She turns and hurries out of scene to the gangplank, and Mary follows her.

TILLMAN
You indulge her too much, Jeff. It's time you set a date.

COOPER
No. I want her to have a full year of freedom, to learn what it's really like out here.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (3)

COOPER (Cont'd)
(he looks after her, his feelings plain)
And I want her to be sure she wants me.

They move off the bridge.

55 EXT. BEACH - A LARGE PAVILION - DAY

flying the flag of the Noble House. A corps of Chinese servants are setting out food and drinks on long tables under the supervision of Gordon Chen, a very tall young Chinese.

GORDON
Hurry, hurry, my revered father will soon be here.

A SERVANT
Why does your noble father not come? See, the white barbarians are becoming impatient.

They have spoken in Chinese, with English sub-titles. Now Gordon turns and sees:

56 A LARGE PAVILION FLYING THE UNION JACK - DAY

on the beach, from Gordon's point of view. There are forty or fifty men standing about restlessly before the open-sided pavilion, including those introduced in the previous scenes. The Brocks and Captain Glessing can be seen pacing the beach, talking to each other urgently.

57 GORDON

more worried than he will admit.

GORDON
If the Tai-Pan is not yet here, he must be engaged in important affairs aboard his ship.

58 INT. DIRK'S CABIN - THE FLYING CLOUD - DAY

Dirk and May-May are in bed, dozing after making love. There is a loud knocking on the door.

CAPTAIN PERRY'S VOICE
Sorry, Tai-Pan, they're all ashore waiting for you ---

He knocks again.

59 CLOSE ON A PEWTER MUG - (INT. BRITISH PAVILION) - DAY

banging down on a table. Wider, we see Longstaff, trying to maintain order. There is a confused babble of voices, in which Brock's becomes predominant.

BROCK'S VOICE
I tell thee, a pox on this stinking island -- !

60 BROCK

as he succeeds in overriding both the clamor and Longstaff's attempt at control.

BROCK
It's bloody insane! We beat the sodding Manchu Emperor to his knees, the whole of China is at our feet, and all we take is this barren sodding rock...!

There is an o.s. murmur of approval from his adherents.

61 thru 65 INT. BRITISH PAVILION - DAY

another angle holding Longstaff, Glessing and Sinclair at a table, and, nearby among the seated traders, Dirk and Robb not far from Brock. There are forty or fifty merchants and traders in the pavilion, of various nationalities. The atmosphere is tense, quarrelsome, most of the men on Brock's side.

BROCK
A colony's got to have decent land and peasants to work it. There's not a crop'll grow here, no fields,
(MORE)

61 thru 65 CONTINUED:

BROCK (Cont'd)
no streams. Even the fishing be rotten. Everything we need will have to come here by sea. We can have a half-dozen more open ports and settlements like what we've got at Canton -- and what does Struan want? This bleeding pimple...!

Now he gets a roar of approbation. Longstaff, flustered, looks to Dirk, who gets to his feet, calm, at ease. He waits for silence, and gets it. Then:

DIRK
A half-dozen more settlements like we have at Canton?....Settlements you can't bring your wives and children into, so you have to leave them in Macao with the kind permission of the Portugese, or keep them aboard ship for a year at a time? ...Settlements where you never know from one week to another when your factory'll be set afire, or soldiers sent in with orders to kill you? Settlements where you have to kiss-ass Ti-sen and the other mandarins for the right to breathe and to pay squeeze until you're red in the face...?

He looks about the silent room, knowing he has hit home.

DIRK
It may be a bleeding pimple, it may be a barren sodding rock, but, by God, it'll be ours, it'll be a British rock, with our own Governor General sitting here, our own laws, our own soldiers, our own fleet, our fortress, by God and by the Queen, and no bloody Manchu emperor or leeching mandarins to kowtow to...
(he pauses, and then finishes quietly)
I tell you, if it's money you're after, there'll be so much of it here you'll never be able to count it... Because China needs the world, and
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

61 thru 65 CONTINUED:(2)

DIRK (Cont'd)
the world needs China, and this island is the key to the gates of the whole empire.

He is holding them, caught up in his dream. Glessing clears his throat loudly, deliberately breaking the silence.

GLESSING
Mr. Struan mentions the fleet, and so I speak as a sailor. This island is bordered by dangerous reefs and shoals, it lies squarely in the path of monstrous storms and typhoons, and I am not at all impressed with this harbor.

DIRK
Not impressed with this harbor, are you, sir? With respect, Captain, I'll speak as a sailor, too, and I tell you this is the safest harbor in a typhoon on God's green earth, and I know because I've been in some, right here, and come out with not a hair out of place. Why else do you think I'm fighting for this island, man?

A dozen men leap to their feet, and Longstaff has to pound for order before he gets it. He has already been convinced by Dirk before this meeting, and he very much wants to be Governor-General of a colony, any colony. But there is something else he wants very much, and he takes sudden advantage of the situation to press for it now.

LONGSTAFF
We've had a full debate, gentlemen, and I shall give it full, fair thought and make my recommendation to Her Majesty's Government in due course...Meanwhile, I shall ask all of you to give equally full and fair thought to a question of great moment, and one that is very close to my heart...I ask you to consider putting an end to the opium trade....

He looks squarely at Dirk, who is as startled and shocked as the others, and who knows what most of the others do not:

(CONTINUED)

61 thru 65 CONTINUED: (3)

that Longstaff is not the dithering, foppish fool he often pretends to be, and that he is that most-to-be-dreaded adversary, the aristocratic English con-man. Dirk studies him now, and it is Brock who reacts first, breaking the stunned silence.

BROCK
Are thee stark, raving mad, sir? Without the opium trade there be no trade here at all! The Chinese won't sell us tea and silk for anything except silver bullion, and it's only with opium we get the silver. Surely, thee must know that by now...!

LONGSTAFF
(holding his ground)
But it's a horrible trade, Mr. Brock. Surely you must know that, too.

BROCK
I know nothing about horrible. I know we need it. I know there won't be a bloody cup of tea in England without it.

DIRK
(sadly)
And thee a Quaker, Brock. A lapsed Quaker, to be sure, the very worst kind.

BROCK
What the hell do thee be saying, man? Thee knows he's talking foolishness. Tell him it can't be done.

Dirk takes his time, knowing now that Longstaff is bargaining, bluffing, perhaps, but demanding a quid pro quo for Hong Kong. He makes his decision, for the island.

DIRK
I'll tell him this; and all of you as well: The Noble House is prepared to give up the opium trade -- at this very moment....

(CONTINUED)

61 thru 65 CONTINUED: (4)

Everyone is staring at him. Robb is shocked, dismayed. Longstaff is smiling happily, nodding at Dirk. And Dirk knows what Longstaff's recommendation will be.

66 CLOSEUP - A CANVAS ON AN EASEL - DAY

And a hand roughly brushing in a sketch of a view of the (Hong Kong) beach. Camera eases back to reveal the painter, ARISTOTLE QUANCE as he works, and then moves away to hold what he is painting: A FULL SHOT OF THE EXT. BEACH, and in the golden sunlight the two pavilions with their contrasting flags fluttering in the breeze, longboats and dinghies drawn up on the shore, sailors in their vari-colored uniforms lounging about. Bright spots of color on an open stretch of beach, Mary Sinclair and Shevaun Tillman are strolling under the protection of their parasols, followed by their escort of two sailors, in the direction of the Struan pavilion, where all the traders have now repaired.

67 CLOSER ON SHEVAUN AND MARY

aware of the concentrated, if carefully masked, attention of the sailors they pass as they promenade. Mary looks up at the beach.

MARY
There he is now, with his brother ---

SHEVAUN
Where?

Then, seeing them in the o.s. distance, she starts to hurry.

MARY
(aghast)
Shevaun -- !

68 MED. LONG SHOT - THE NOBLE HOUSE PAVILION - DAY

from the girls' point of view, as Dirk and Robb come out of it, followed at a respectful distance by Gordon Chen.

69 and 70 CLOSER ON DIRK AND ROBB

coming to a stop a short distance from the pavilion, where

(CONTINUED)

69 and 70 CONTINUED:

the traders have fallen on the refreshments. Gordon remains in the background. Robb is pale, worried, Dirk calm, easy.

ROBB
I fully understand you didn't mean it, Dirk, but how will you explain it to Longstaff -- and everyone -- when you go back on what you said? How will you keep face?

DIRK
Robb -- you're thinking Chinese at last! You've accepted the concept of face -- congratulations! And don't worry. I do mean it....

Robb stares at him, shocked.

DIRK
We'll talk about it later. You'd best go back in now. They may think we're not in agreement.

He pushes him gently toward the pavilion. Robb goes, pulling himself together. Dirk gestures for Gordon to come to him. Gordon comes, and bows respectfully.

DIRK
You've set an excellent table, Gordon. Thank you.

GORDON
(he has perfect English)
Thank you, Mr. Struan. The noble lady is well, I trust?

DIRK
Very well, thanks. As is your mother, I hope?

GORDON
Yes, thank you, Mr. Struan. She speaks of you often with gratitude and respect, as do I.

He sees Brock and Gorth coming out of the tent and bearing down on them.

(CONTINUED)

69 and 70 CONTINUED: (2)

GORDON
Your friends are coming -- may I go, sir?

He bows and diplomatically finds something to do elsewhere.

Brock is still chewing a mouthful of food and carrying a glass of brandy as they come to Dirk, and he takes his time, swallowing the last mouthful of food and then washing it down with brandy. Gorth is watching the two men, seeing the cold hatred in their eyes, enjoying the instant tension of which he is a part. Then Brock drains his glass, and deliberately smashes it on the rocky shore.

BROCK
Good grub. Thee have trained thy bastard well.

DIRK
(untouched)
He's a good lad.
(he looks at Gorth blandly)
Never given me the slightest cause for embarrassment or worry.

Without understanding how or why, both Brock and Gorth feel he has parried and scored. Gorth stiffens.

BROCK
What's this shit about giving up the opium trade, man? Thee cannot live without it, no more than the rest of us. If thee thinks thee's bought Longstaff with an empty promise, thee're pissed, man....

Dirk turns and points up to the prominent knoll. They follow his gesture.

DIRK
I'm going to buy that knoll, Tyler, and build a mansion there for The Noble House. There's not another site like it on the whole island. The view is magnificent.

BROCK
Enjoy it. Thee'll be all alone on this bloody rock.

(CONTINUED)

69 and 70 CONTINUED: (3)

He nods to Gorth, and they stride away. Dirk looks after them, smiling, then turns to go back into the tent, and stops when he hears:

MARY'S VOICE
Tai-Pan -- wait ---

He turns and sees:

71 MARY AND SHEVAUN

approaching, Shevaun's face partly hidden by her parasol. But Mary is recognizable to:

72 DIRK

pleased to see her. Watching her approach, he remembers her as a child.

73 MARY AND SHEVAUN

coming toward camera, and favoring Mary. Then, both girls fade into the b.g. as Dirk's memory is superimposed: Horatio and Mary, eleven and nine respectively, cling to Dirk's hands as he challenges their father, the REV. SINCLAIR in the SINCLAIR MACAO STUDY - NIGHT.

DIRK
This is the second time your children have run away from you and come to me, Reverend. If they do it again, I'll see they're taken away from you.

His look goes to a wicker basket holding a number of canes, and Sinclair's ravaged glance follows it.

DIRK
And if you ever whip them again, I'll use one of those canes on you, right in the middle of your church...
(to the children)
Horatio, Mary, go to your rooms. And don't be afraid....

Mary and Horatio release Dirk and, holding hands, go out of the room. THE SCENE FADES, bringing back Mary and Shevaun

73 CONTINUED:

approaching, the camera trucking back with them to include Dirk, as they reach him.

DIRK
Mary, it's a finer day for seeing you ---

MARY
And you, Tai-Pan. I want you to meet a new friend...

And as Dirk turns to Shevaun, she lifts her parasol.

74 CLOSEUP - SHEVAUN

as Dirk sees her now, stunningly beautiful, as she has intended.

MARY'S VOICE
Shevaun Tillman....

75 CLOSE - DIRK

as he reacts to the sight of her.

MARY'S VOICE
Samuel Tillman's niece, who arrived three days ago.

76 DIRK, SHEVAUN AND MARY

as Mary, already in the background, observes the mutual and immediate impact Dirk and Shevaun have on each other.

DIRK
Of course. Senator Tillman's daughter, from the state of Massachusetts. And Jeff Cooper's fiancee. He's a lucky man.

SHEVAUN
(lightly)
That remains to be seen -- Tai-pan.

DIRK
You've lost no time learning our outlandish words.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

SHEVAUN
I find everything here fascinating.

SAILOR'S VOICE
Mr. Struan -- Mr. Struan, sir -- !

They turn to see

77 EXT. BEACH - DAY

where one of Dirk's Sailors runs up from the beached longboat with a telescope. In the far distance, a Struan clipper is entering the harbor.

SAILOR
It's Thunder Cloud, sir ---

78 THE GROUP

as the Sailor reaches them, and hands Dirk the telescope.

DIRK
Excuse me ---

He looks out toward the ship.

79 LONG SHOT - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

through the telescope, focusing on her signal flaps and then holding on the one that has a black square.

80 RESUME 78

Dirk lowers the telescope.

DIRK
(to the Sailor)
Tell my brother to join me.
We're wanted aboard.

The Sailor hurries to the tent. Dirk turns to the girls.

DIRK
I'm sorry. I look forward to
the pleasure of meeting you again,
Miss Tillman.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

SHEVAUN
Shevaun.

DIRK
Thank you.
(he smiles at Mary)
Look after yourself, Mary. Oh, Horatio's doing very well with Mr. Longstaff.

MARY
Thanks to you, Tai-Pan.

He leaves them. They look after him.

SHEVAUN
You've known him a long time, haven't you?

MARY
Yes, he's been very good to me, and my brother, Horatio.
(she looks at her shrewdly)
Is he what you expected? Are you disappointed?

SHEVAUN
No.

MARY
I'm afraid you will be. He has a wife and children in England...

SHEVAUN
(calmly, not missing a beat)
Pity.

Robb, hurrying past them, lifts his hat and lopes on down toward the longboat.

81 EXT. HARBOR - DAY - MED. FULL SHOT

The Noble House longboat, Dirk and Robb in the stern, is being rowed out to Thunder Cloud.

ROBB'S VOICE
But surely there were only Chinese in that place you saw ---

82 DIRK AND ROBB

in the stern of the longboat. Dirk is looking at Robb sardonically.

ROBB
I mean to say, how can you be certain it was as bad as you thought? There is a difference in the races, that's well known. They have no tolerance for alcohol, as we do. It's fatal to them. Whereas, I've heard people say opium is actually beneficial to the Chinese.

DIRK
Then they haven't seen what I've seen. It is not beneficial. It's a poison.

ROBB
And is that the reason you've promised to get out of the trade?

DIRK
Robb, I'll tell you the truth. I hate the opium trade. But, if we could have Hong Kong without giving it up, I don't know if I'd have the strength to get out, because we need it. But if the price for Hong Kong is giving it up, I'm willing to pay it, and gladly.

ROBB
How can we, and stay in business?

Dirk shrugs lightly.

DIRK
I don't know. We'll have to find a way.

Robb is not convinced. But his mind reverts to the present, and the ship they are approaching.

ROBB
The flag said, 'owners requested aboard'?

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Yes. And another about important dispatches.

83 EXT. BRIDGE - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

as Dirk and Robb climb up on the bridge and are met by big Orlov, who is now its captain.

ORLOV
Welcome aboard, gentlemen...

He is somber, and Dirk is immediately alert to it.

DIRK
Something wrong, Orlov?

ORLOV
You'll see that for yourself. Just about now, I think.

He turns toward the main cabin housing, as the sound of the hatch opening can be heard, and they swing with him.

Through the open hatch, Cullum Struan appears, in his early twenties, pale, weak, emaciated, supported by the First Mate and a Sailor. Dirk and Robb stare at him, as he is held upright by the two men.

ORLOV
It's your son, Tai-Pan. It's Cullum ---

Dirk is staggered.

ORLOV
(unhappily)
It was the plague. I made my usual visit -- and they were all dead. Your wife, the other children, the cousins....

DIRK
(shocked)
All? Winifred -- my two girls -- ?

ORLOV
He was the only one left. If you think he's bad now, you should
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

ORLOV (Cont'd)
have seen him then. I thought it best to fetch him here, to you...

DIRK
Cullum....

CULLUM
Father ---

Dirk moves to him, his arms wide and outstretched, and Cullum steps weakly forward and falls into his embrace.

84 INT. CULLUM'S CABIN - DAY

Cullum is dozing in his bunk. Dirk is sitting nearby, studying the pale, bony face. He remembers the last time he saw Cullum:

85 EXT. DECK - CHINA CLOUD _ DAY (FLASHBACK)

SUPERIMPOSED over Cullum above, as Winifred Struan, Cullum, aged twelve, and two younger girls come aboard, sailors carrying their luggage going before and behind.

86 EXT. MACAO PIER - DAY - DIRK

Superimposed as above. Careless of the onlookers, Dirk calls up to his estranged and departing wife.

DIRK
Winifred -- Winifred...!

His plea for her to stay is clear in both his voice and eyes.

87 EXT. DECK - CHINA CLOUD - DAY

Winifred overcomes whatever weakness she may feel. She shakes her head, gathers the girls, and goes on, out of scene. Only the young Cullum remains behind, torn by conflicting loyalties. Crying, he waves goodbye.

YOUNG CULLUM
Goodbye, father. Don't forget me!... Goodbye....

He moves away.

88 EXT. PIER - DAY

Superimposed as before, as from the ship.

DIRK
(bereft)
No...I won't, I'm afraid....

The scene FADES OUT, resuming Sc. 84, as Cullum stirs in his sleep.

Behind Dirk, Robb comes in, pale and dazed, with a handful of letters and documents.

DIRK
What is it, Robb?

ROBB
(sick)
Scarlet Cloud is missing, presumed sunk. But there's worse....

He hands the papers to Dirk, who looks at them, reads, and then reacts with rage.

DIRK
(bellowing)
No -- !

Cullum wakes up, startled. Robb flinches.

ROBB
It's my fault, I know. I should never have kept all our funds in one bank. But it gave us a million pounds of collateral under one roof -- strengthened our position ---
(he is almost babbling now)
The bank was as strong as the Bank of England -- !

DIRK
(controlled again)
Except that it wasn't the Bank of England...If I understand this, we're broke. We owe a million, and we've got nothing. Is that correct?

ROBB
It's my fault.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Oh, shut up, Robb. You managed our funds beautifully until this happened. There's not a man out here who can match you. You made a mistake, that's all.

There is a knock on the cabin door, and the Mate pokes his head in.

MATE
Sorry, sir. It's Mr. Tyler Brock, asking permission to come aboard.

DIRK
(surprised, wary)
Permission granted.

The Mate goes. Dirk gets his coat, puts it on.

DIRK
Who knows about this?

ROBB
(in sudden panic)
Every man aboard, from what Orlov tells me. It was the sensation of London...But what will we do?

Cullum is watching and listening in his bunk, fascinated by his father.

DIRK
(smiling grimly)
We will survive. As we have before. Remember the joss of The Noble House? It'll see us through...
(then)
Why, I wonder, should Mr. Brock be paying us a visit today?

He starts out. Cullum starts to get out of bed.

CULLUM
I'd like to come up on deck, father.

DIRK
No, boy. Rest.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (2)

CULLUM
Please. I can do with some air.

He makes himself sit upright. Dirk gives in, shoots Robb a silent request to help him up, and goes out.

89 thru 97 EXT. QUARTER-DECK THUNDER CLOUD - DAY - BROCK is facing into the wind. He turns as he hears Dirk approaching, and the camera view widens to include Gorth, behind him, and Dirk as he comes out.

DIRK
What do you want?

Brock takes his time.

BROCK
A good ship, this....

DIRK
I have nineteen more.

BROCK
Aye, I know....

He is looking at Dirk curiously, savoring the moment. Dirk waits, puzzled. Cullum, supported by Robb, comes up on deck, and Brock and Gorth look him over.

BROCK
(unimpressed)
This thy boy, is he?

DIRK
Yes.

BROCK
I've heard about it. The plague.
Hope he hasn't brought it with him.

DIRK
So do I. I'll ask you once more --
what do you want?

BROCK
(smiling)
Thy joss has gone bad, Tai-Pan.
Thy bank's gone busted, and thee's
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

89 thru 97 CONTINUED:

BROCK (Cont'd)
not got a copper to thy name. And I started buying up thy paper six months ago.
(he enjoys Dirk's surprise)
Thee owes me a little more than eight hundred thousand, Tai-Pan. payable a little less than ninety days from now.

DIRK
(calmly)
You'll get it.

BROCK
(deliberately)
Thee's not got a chance in the world of finding so much so soon, and thee knows it. I'll be taking everything thee've got -- thy ships, thy factories, The Noble House, the lot. Thee are finished, Struan. And when I take over, I'll want all of thee, the whole pack of Struans, out of the China Seas...forever...
(he reaches into his pocket)
Thee used to be Tai-Pan. Thee ain't no more.
(he comes up with a handful of gold coins)
Here. Buy thyself a coffin.

He flings the coins down on the deck at Dirk's feet, and goes, followed by a hugely delighted Gorth. Dirk is controlled, Robb filled with remorse and fear. Cullum, puzzled, looks down at the gold coins on the deck, stoops and gathers them up.

DIRK
(harshly)
Leave them, Cullum.

But Cullum already has them.

CULLUM
I don't understand. What did he mean?

(CONTINUED)

89 thru 97 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
(smiling grimly)
What he said. It's coffin money. It's a custom out here...When you destroy a man, or strip him clean, or intend to, you give him enough to get himself buried...Throw them over the side.

CULLUM
But --
(he counts them)
There's twenty guineas here ---

DIRK
I said, throw it away.

Cullum obeys.

DIRK
Orlov -- ! Mate ---

Orlov and the First Mate hurry on to the quarter-deck.

DIRK
Who's been ashore?

MATE
Only me, sir, for the fresh water...

DIRK
Then you're the one.

MATE
One what, sir?

DIRK
The one who's sold me out for money. The one who's Brock's ears aboard my ship, who brings him early news when my ships are faster than his.

He hits the Mate and sends him spinning to the deck. The Mate brings up a knife, but Dirk stamps it out of his hand. Then, evenly matched in size and brawn, they fight with fists and legs.

Cullum and the others look on as Dirk beats the Mate to the deck, unconscious. Panting, Dirk moves to the rail, cups his hand and yells.

89 thru 97 CONTINUED: (3)

DIRK
Brock -- !

98 BROCK'S LONGBOAT - DAY

from Thunder Cloud, as it is rowed away. Brock hears Dirk, and rises to reply, his voice faint in the distance.

BROCK
What is it?

99 RESUME 89 THRU 97

DIRK
Take your spy with you -- !

He turns, reaches out his hand to the now-conscious Mate. Dazed, the man takes it. Dirk whirls, exerts all his strength and flings him over his shoulder, then up and over the rail.

100 MED. FULL SHOT - DAY

Holding both Thunder Cloud and Brock's longboat, as Brock sees Dirk at the rail, and the Mate's body plummeting over the side and into the water.

101 EXT. QUARTER-DECK - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

Everyone is silent, as Dirk turns and walks steadily off the deck. Cullum looks after him. This is not the father he remembers.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

102 EXT. ENGLISH SETTLEMENT GARDEN - CANTON - DAY

As seen in Sc. 19, except that now, in the daylight, the garden is filled with Chinese and Portugese employees of the English traders, moving in and out of the buildings that surround the gardens. The Noble House headquarters, larger than all the rest, dominates the walled garden and the square beyond.

103 CLOSER - ROBB

fresh from shipboard and carrying a dispatch case as well as another bundle of papers, strides through the garden to the entrance of The Noble House factory. He is strained, worried, and, at the same time, determined.

104 INT. DIRK'S CANTON OFFICE - DAY

Dirk is standing at a window, looking down into a courtyard where Cullum is being instructed in the martial arts.

105 CULLUM AND HIS CHINESE INSTRUCTOR

as they spar against each other. Almost three months have passed and Cullum is fully recovered and in excellent condition, his well-muscled body gleaming with sweat. He is good at it, and he enjoys it.

106 DIRK

is pleased. He turns as Robb enters the office and takes the dispatch case and papers to the desk.

DIRK
Ah, Robb...Have a good crossing? All well in Macao?

ROBB
I was glad to leave...I don't know, perhaps I'm imagining it, but I have the feeling everyone in Macao is watching me...Still, Sarah's well and sends her love... Is there any news?

DIRK
He's coming along very nicely.

ROBB
Who?

DIRK
Cullum, of course.

ROBB
(startled)
Cullum?...Dirk, in less than a week Tyler Brock and his son may be sitting at this desk...

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

Dirk looks at the great partners desk, and the curios and objets d'art on it, set off by its gleaming surface. Most prominent is an intricate and highly detailed ivory carving of an intertwined lion and dragon, the symbol of The Noble House. He picks it up.

ROBB
Is there any news?

DIRK
No...
(grimly amused)
You are being watched, Robb, because you're very attractive, like a stuffed roast goose. If we go down, there'll be bargains here for all our friends...Our only hope now is Jin-Qua.

ROBB
And -- ?

DIRK
And the story's always the same: he's expected back in Canton any day now. It has the clarion ring of absolute falsehood about it.

ROBB
(dully)
My God. I can't believe we're finished. Is there nothing we can do?

DIRK
We can pray that our joss will do the trick for us, as it has before.

ROBB
(impatiently)
Joss ---

DIRK
You've got to believe in your joss, Robb, or it doesn't work for you.

He goes back to the window to watch Cullum. Robb pulls himself together and prepares to have it out with Dirk.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: (2)

ROBB
Dirk, I'm certain it's no secret to you that Sarah's been unhappy here from the beginning.

DIRK
No. No secret.

ROBB
She wants to go home. Now.

DIRK
I'm not surprised. I'm sorry for you both. I know what it's like.

ROBB
Yes, but unlike you, I could never let my wife go. I suppose the truth is The Noble House just doesn't mean as much to me as it does to you...Dirk, if it's over, if we're finished -- there's fifty thousand pounds left in our Scottish bank. Give me my half, and let me go -- !

Dirk turns from the window, and stares at him, half in anger, half pity.

DIRK
Your half? It's half of nothing. Robb, if we can't pay up, we're bankrupt! That money in Scotland's not ours to share, lad. You're dreaming!
(there is a knock at the door)
Come in ---

Fong comes in, bows. Robb, crushed, is hardly aware of him.

FONG
Jin-Qua servant say Jin-Qua not in Canton. Maybe come one day, maybe two days, maybe no come long time, never mind.

Robb, who has heard him, is sick. Dirk smiles grimly.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: (3)

DIRK
Never mind.

107 JIN-QUA - DAY

in his great chair in the room we have seen before. He strikes a small gong. The view widens. The door opens. May-May, dressed in full and formal Chinese style, comes in, goes to Jin-Qua. She kowtows deeply.

108 RESUME SCENE 106

Fong bows, starts out, then stops and gives way as Longstaff comes through the open door, excited, full of himself.

LONGSTAFF
Do forgive. Door was open so I trotted right in. Not interrupting anything, I hope? How are you both?

DIRK
Never better. Welcome back, Willie. You have the look of a man who has something extremely important to say.

LONGSTAFF
I do, indeed, by jove. But first, you are solving your, er, problems, I trust?

DIRK
(cheerfully)
Every one.

Robb stares at him.

LONGSTAFF
Good! I knew you would -- can't beat The Noble House, can they?... Now, my news. I've made up my mind -- it's Hong Kong -- Whitehall has approved -- unofficially, to be sure, but nevertheless...and I'm to be Governor General -- !

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Congratulations! Well done, William! You've made the right decision, hasn't he, Robb?

Robb nods wryly, still reacting to Longstaff's easy disregard for their situation.

LONGSTAFF
Thank you, dear fellow. Mind you, your own decision to give up the opium trade was an important factor, indeed. It's bound to influence the other traders, and I'm grateful to you, old boy. For many things...Now then, as I said, it's still unofficial, and that's a bore, because I would like to get it all...moving, do you know what I mean?

DIRK
Of course.

LONGSTAFF
But there'll be no money until the flag's raised and all that, and you can't run a colony without the lucre, can you? I was wondering, Dirk....

Dirk, amused, enjoys watching him work.

DIRK
Yes...?

LONGSTAFF
You'll all need land, for homes and offices and warehouses and so forth, and <u>your</u> heart is set on one spot in particular, I know. If I went ahead and sold leaseholds now, I could have the colony self-supporting in no time, couldn't I, even before the formalities?

DIRK
You could. Spoken like a true, go-ahead Governor-General, Willie.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: (2)

LONGSTAFF
Thank you...But -- if the Government should change its mind -- unlikely, but anything is possible, after all -- and I'd spent all the money, I'd be for it, wouldn't I?

DIRK
Do it. I'll stand good for you.

Robb is aghast.

LONGSTAFF
You're a friend! I knew I could count on you! This is marvelous! Now all I need is someone who knows something about selling land, the legal odds and ends, and all that....

Cullum comes in, flushed and exhilarated.

CULLUM
Oh -- I'm sorry ---

DIRK
Here's the man, Willie, a law student and top of his class to boot. Your Excellency, my son Cullum. He'll look after your land sales for you.

Cullum is even more surprised than Robb.

LONGSTAFF
Will you, young fellow?

CULLUM
Yes, if my father -- and you -- want me to, sir. I can't say I actually know a great deal about it.

LONGSTAFF
Never fear, it's bound to be more than I do!...Gentlemen, we're embarked on a great adventure ---

109 INT. GREAT DINING ROOM - CANTON - NIGHT - FULL SHOT

Traders, including Brock, Gorth, Cooper, Tillman, and others we have seen, occupy every chair around the massive table. At the head are Dirk and Longstaff, with Cullum and Horatio Sinclair in attendance, a large scale map of Hong Kong behind them. The map is divided into numbered lot sites.

LONGSTAFF
Gentlemen, we're embarked on a great adventure...!

110 CLOSER ON LONGSTAFF AND DIRK

LONGSTAFF
The auction will take place six weeks from today, and Mr. Aristotle Quance, the distinguished artist, who has some knowledge of these things, will preside.

Dirk is looking off at:

111 CLOSE SHOT - LARGE SILK HANGING

of a scarlet lion and a green dragon, intertwined.

LONGSTAFF'S VOICE
Study the map, gentlemen, study the island....

112 GROUP SHOT

holding Dirk, Longstaff, Robb, Brock, others.

LONGSTAFF
(continuing)
Make your choices, and good luck to you, in Her Majesty's newest colony!

He sits down to general applause. Brock rises.

BROCK
Thee have said thyself it's not official, Excellency. Suppose the government changes its mind? What becomes of the money we've laid out for worthless land?

112 CONTINUED:

LONGSTAFF
Every penny returned, dear fellow. I guarantee it.

Brock is tempted to ask the source of the guaranty, but thinks better of it, and sits down disgruntled. Robb is pale. Dirk looks up at the silk hanging again, and gets up.

DIRK
Thank you, your Excellency, and The Noble House will be buying a large number of sites. Gentlemen, it is a great adventure, and to celebrate its beginning, my brother and I have great pleasure in inviting you all to a grand ball immediately after the auction.

Robb and Brock are looking at him, stupefied, each with the same question: Where is the money? There is loud applause. Dirk raises his arms to stop it.

DIRK
Wait, gentlemen. I appreciate your applause, but you may not have fully considered the consequences. If there's to be a ball, then your wives and daughters must have new ball gowns....

Applause is replaced by groans of mock dismay.

DIRK
However, as the Chinese say, never mind. I shall give a prize of a thousand guineas to the lady who wears the most beautiful gown. There's incentive for you -- !

Robb and Brock, each in their own way, are looking at him in profound disbelief. There is a mixture of loud applause, continued groans and cheers, and at the same time the great doors are flung open and a parade of Chinese servants comes in bearing large trays of food and drinks. Now the cheers become general, as the refreshments are brought to the table.

But Dirk, suddenly alert, is looking across the room to the doorway, where Fong has come in, and is nodding to him in silent signal. Dirk turns to Longstaff.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
(easily)
Excuse me a moment, will you?

Casually, he leaves the table. Brock watches him go, puzzled, ignoring the food that is being put on his plate.

113 INT. JIN-QUA'S RECEPTION ROOM - NIGHT

Jin-Qua is placing bits of dim sum on Dirk's plate. Dirk waits in silence, giving nothing. They eat, Jin-Qua deliverately taking his time. At last:

JIN-QUA
Hear Tai-Pan need money. Hear One-Eye Devil have Tai-Pan by throat.

DIRK
Never mind.

He eats, drinks his tea.

JIN-QUA
Jin-Qua borrow money. Two million pound sterling bullion, likee this. Werry expensee.

He opens a lacquered casket which Dirk has not noticed on the table, and discloses a polished silver ingot.

JIN-QUA
Jin-Qua lend Tai-Pan, you pay back five year, no interest. Tai-Pan want?

Dirk is startled. It is even more than he needs, beyond what he has hoped for, complete rescue and more, incredibly generous.

DIRK
You say two million, no interest? What Jin-Qua want?

JIN-QUA
Tai-Pan buy tea only from Jin-Qua, silk only from Jin-Qua, spice only from Jin-Qua, for twenty year. You pay twenty per cent more than market price. You can?

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Five year, five percent more.

Jin-Qua looks at him squarely. Dirk returns it.

JIN-QUA
(hard)
Fifteen year, fifteen percent.

DIRK
Ten year, ten percent.

JIN-QUA
(harshly)
No. Fifteen year, fifteen percent. Finish! You hear?

Deliberately, Dirk gets up and starts out.

JIN-QUA
Why for go?

DIRK
No can fifteen year, fifteen percent. Finish.

To his surprise, Jin-Qua cackles shrilly.

JIN-QUA
Ten year, ten percent. You have.

Dirk stifles the thrill of triumph, knowing there is more to come.

DIRK
No more?

JIN-QUA
More. Now you have much bullion, opium trade finish?

DIRK
Finish.

Jin-Qua nods, satisfied.

JIN-QUA
More. Man get favor, man give favor.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
What favor?

JIN-QUA
You buy good land Hong Kong for Jin-Qua. One hundred thousand dolla, you pay. Can?

DIRK
Can.

JIN-QUA
More. Next year I send one son Hong Kong. You send him English school all same like your son. Can?

Dirk studies him, increasingly intrigued.

DIRK
Can.

JIN-QUA
More. Your China son, Gordon Chen. Good?

DIRK
(surprised)
Good. You want I give bigger job?

JIN-QUA
What for bigger job? You lend fifty thousand dolla, no interest, you take half profit. You can?

DIRK
(puzzled)
Can....

JIN-QUA
Last ----

Jin-Qua puts his hand in his sleeve pocket and brings out a small leather pouch, opens it, and spills out eight coin halves on the table. Dirk looks down at them, and then at Jin-Qua as he sees that four coins have been cut into halves. With one of his fingernail protectors, Jin-Qua pushes a half of each coin across the table toward Dirk.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (3)

JIN-QUA
Four favor. Some man come some time with one half, you give favor.

DIRK
What kind favor? Maybe bad favor, maybe law no likee?

JIN-QUA
Maybe my law no likee, maybe white devil law no likee, but not bad favor.

DIRK
When man come?

JIN-QUA
(shrugging)
Some time. Tomorrow. Ten year, twenny year, never mind. That how I borrow money. Werry hard, take werry long time. You want money, you do four favor. You can?

Dirk stares down at him, thinking hard, facing the open-ended commitment, then at the coins and the silver ingot. There is no other way to save the Noble House.

DIRK
Can.

JIN-QUA
(he smiles)
Bullion come your factory in night tomorrow. You take away from Canton werry damn quick. Much bullion, plenty danger.

DIRK
Plenty. I go quick....You want I sign name?

JIN-QUA
No sign.

Dirk looks at him in wonder and admiration.

DIRK
My way, shake hand. I know it not Chinese way, never mind. We shake hand. Please.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (4)

He puts his hand out. Jin-Qua looks up at him dryly for a long moment, shakes his head a little, then reaches over, delicately touches Dirk's hand with his, and withdraws from the (to him) vulgar contact immediately.

114 INT. MOVING SEDAN CHAIR - NIGHT

Dirk sways and bounces with the rapid movement of the sedan chair, as he reviews the meeting he has just had with Jin-Qua.

115 EXT. HOG STREET - CANTON - NIGHT

The street is dark and deserted except for Dirk's sedan chair. Suddenly, from a hidden alley, three assassins with spears hurl themselves at the bearers and linkmen. Their attack is so sudden and fierce that the two linkmen are dead before they know it, and the frightened bearers drop the chair.

116 thru 118 DIRK is thrown to one side in the grounded chair. Reaching for his knife, he tears a curtain aside, and throws himself out of the chair just as three spears rip through the thin sides. The bearers are running away. The three spearmen are pulling their weapons free. Dirk darts at the nearest one, shoves his knife into the man's side. Meanwhile, the second spearman abandons his spear, frees the fighting-iron (a deadly, brutal weapon made of three, foot-long iron shafts linked together, with a barbed iron ball at the very end) hanging from his belt and bears down on Dirk, who spins away in time to receive only a glancing blow on his shoulder. He grapples with the man for the fighting-iron, and the killer screams as the spear of the third spearman, intended for Dirk, impales him from behind. Dirk holds onto the fighting-iron and backs against a wall as the third spearman quickly frees his spear and moves against him, panting but determined.

They feint at each other. Then the spearman lunges, and his spear jabs through Dirk's coat, but at the same time Dirk twists and swings the fighting iron into a crushing blow into the killer's side that, among other damage, breaks his spine with an audible crack. Dirk moves away, puts his back to the wall, and waits, his eyes searching the darkness. The street is silent except for the groans of the man he has just gutted. He turns and runs.

119 INT. DIRK'S BEDROOM - CANTON - NIGHT

Blackness. Then a lamp is lit, and in its light Dirk and the bedroom revealed. May-May wakes up, sees his state, the blood from his shoulder wound.

MAY-MAY
What the hell happened to you?

Dirk wheels on her, startled.

DIRK
What the hell are you doing here? Didn't I tell you to stay away from Canton and the Settlement?

She leaps out of bed and hurries to him, to take off his coat and shirt.

MAY-MAY
You been away so long, I begin to think you got another wife here in Canton. Good thing I do come, if you go around playing silly buggers and get yourself all cut up. You got nothing else to do?
(as his shirt comes off and reveals his wound)
Look, look, you terrible man -- ! You stay right here while I get hot water and spirits ---

She hurries out. Dirk gives up.

120 DIRK AND MAY-MAY IN BED

later. Dirk's wound has been dressed, and they lie naked together, resting after love.

MAY-MAY
You must trust me very much to tell me all this.

DIRK
I trust you.

MAY-MAY
I thank you. You do me much honor, and give me much face, Tai-
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

MAY-MAY (Cont'd)
Pan...So much bullion, all in one place, enough to make any person rich for life...Anyone would consider how to steal it. Anyone.

DIRK
How would you go about it?

MAY-MAY
I would go to the first Mandarin, Ti-Sen... For a guarantee fifty percent, he disregard even the Emperor.

DIRK
Really? Would disregard the Emperor.

MAY-MAY
That's what I say. Then he lets your boat with the bullion get downriver, and he intercepts it, and cuts your throat. Easy. But then he would cheat me out of my share and I'd have to be his woman. Dirty turtledung! Not for all the tea in China, not that pig fornicator. You know he's almost important?

DIRK
(puzzled)
Almost important?

MAY-MAY
Sure. He can't hardly do it anymore. Everybody knows. He has to have two girls at the same time, one to play with him while the other one works. Also, he's so small he has to fit things on himself, enormous. Also, he likes to sleep with ducks.

DIRK
Will you stop talking such drivel?

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: (2)

MAY-MAY
What's drivel?

DIRK
Nonsense.

MAY-MAY
It's not nonsense. Everybody knows.

DIRK
I don't want to hear about it. At least, I don't want to hear about it from you!

MAY-MAY
Why? Why you shocked when I tell you ordinary things? Many people use things to improve sex. Very important to improve sex, if you can. Eat right food, use right medicines. If you're small, it's not bad to improve your joss and give your girl more pleasure. But not like that dirty pig! He does it just to hurt. He ---

DIRK
Will you never shut up?

MAY-MAY
(insulted)
You are very rude, Tai-Pan!

She turns her back on him, and sulks. Dirk enjoys the curved lines of her smooth-skinned back and her averted face.

MAY-MAY
(finally)
So, how you going to get your bullion out of Canton?

He sits up thoughtfully, and decides to try his plan out on her.

DIRK
China Cloud, with my brother, my son, and you, will sail for Hong Kong the day after tomorrow. The
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: (3)

DIRK (Cont'd)
silver will be aboard an armed lorcha Jin-Qua is lending me. I'll take it out that night, and rendezvous with another of our clippers off the Marble Pagoda. We'll transfer the bullion at sea.

She thinks it over.

MAY-MAY
Very good. Also, thank you for allowing me to meet your European son. It will give me very much face. But not this time, please. I must be with you.

DIRK
(harshly)
No. And this time, don't disobey me...I mean it.

May-May turns and faces him.

MAY-MAY
(simply)
Tai-Pan, I ask you something, do you think I want to live if you are not here?

Dirk looks at her for a long moment, and sees the open and unashamed love there. Moved, he bends and kisses her deeply.

121 EXT. GARDEN GATE - NOBLE HOUSE FACTORY - NIGHT

Four figures in Chinese coolie clothing come quietly out of the garden and into the narrow street. They pad silently away, but not before they can be seen as Dirk, May-May, one-armed Captain Orlov and Fong.

When they are out of view, a Chinese comes out of the shadows. He shadows them noiselessly.

122 EXT. RIVER - CANTON - NIGHT

Low in the water, an armed lorcha -- a light Chinese sailing vessel with a European type of hull and a Chinese rig -- with two large red eyes painted on either side of the prow, moves sluggishly down the dark and silent river, through a sleeping floating village.

123 INT. HOLD - THE LORCHA - NIGHT

May-May is holding a lantern for Dirk as he opens a large battered packing case, one of sixty that line both sides of the hold, leaving a passage down the center.

The packing case is filled with silver bars and ingots. Dirk replaces the top, and moves to another.

124 EXT. BRIDGE - LORCHA - NIGHT

Orlov, a pistol at his waist, is at the helm.

125 EXT. STERN - THE LORCHA - NIGHT

Similarly armed, Fong is on lookout at the stern.

126 EXT. RIVER - ANOTHER VIEW - NIGHT

as the slowly moving lorcha drifts down the quiet river.

127 EXT. RIVER - DAY - FULL

Now the river, broad and muddy, is filled with its normal daylight traffic. The red-eyed lorcha proceeds through the flow of the lorchas, junks and sampans.

128 EXT. RIVER TRAFFIC - DAY

shooting from the deck of a lorcha anchored in the floating village. The red-eyed lorcha sails into view and past, Dirk clearly in view on the bridge. The angle widens to include Brock and Gorth on the deck of the anchored lorcha.

BROCK
He had to be up to something...
(he looks after the red-eyed lorcha)
Low in the water, ain't she?

GORTH
Heavy cargo. What might it be?

BROCK
(he grins wolfishly)
We shall see, maybe. By God, I
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

BROCK (Cont'd)
haven't had a chance at him alone like this in twenty years. He's mine today...Come along, lift anchor -- !

129 EXT. RIVER - DAY - FULL SHOT

shooting from behind Brock's lorcha as, under full sail, she moves down the river. Far ahead, Dirk's lorcha can be seen threading through the traffic.

130 EXT. RIVER - ANOTHER ANGLE - DAY

as Brock's lorcha follows Dirk's.

131 EXT. DIRK'S LORCHA - DAY - DIRK

at the bow, looking through his telescope. He makes a full circle, and as his view comes astern, he stiffens.

DIRK
Bloody Brock....

132 EXT. STERN - DIRK'S LORCHA - DAY

Dirk, Orlov and May-May at the four-pound cannon in the stern, with powder kegs, grape and shot ready at hand. Orlov kicks the gun, disgusted.

ORLOV
Damn thing's fixed solid, you see? Can't swivel. Neither does the other one in the bow.

MAY-MAY
What's that mean?

DIRK
It means our guns won't be very useful if we're attacked by Brock.

MAY-MAY
(pointing off)
What kind of gun is that?

They look, and see:

133 EXT. DECK - MIDSHIP - HARPOON GUN - DAY

from their point of view.

DIRK'S VOICE
A harpoon gun....

134 RESUME 128

DIRK
That'll be very useful -- if we're attacked by a whale. Or a school of herrings....

MAY-MAY
Why does he follow us?

DIRK
Why, indeed?
(to Orlov)
But, he won't shell us or board us unless we start it. That would be piracy. It's more his style to arrange an accident.

He kicks the cannon himself, looks off at the harpoon gun, and frowns.

135 thru 140 SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY ***

as Orlov maneuvers the lorcha through the river traffic, and Brock's lorcha continues the pursuit, INTERCUT with Dirk, amidships at the harpoon gun. He has ripped off the sleeve of his coolie jacket, and, as May-May watches, tears it into strips. Then May-May, under his instructions, pours gunpowder into the strips. Dirk soaks the strips in lamp oil and ties them to the hafts of two harpoons, one already in the gun, the other in reserve. Meanwhile, Brock's lorcha continues to follow them relentlessly, openly. Gradually the river grows wider, becoming an estuary, and the traffic thins out. At last, at sunset, the two lorchas, almost alone, have reached the open sea.

141 EXT. SEA - NIGHT ***

The two lorchas, still a considerable distance apart, are alone on the moonlit sea. The larger lorcha, Brock's, changes direction and comes about swiftly.

142 EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Fong is at the helm, under Orlov's guidance, while the big man keeps his eyes on Brock's lorcha. He sees it make its turn, and calls to Dirk.

ORLOV
He's going to ram us ---

He takes the wheel from Fong.

143 EXT. MIDSHIPS - NIGHT

where Dirk and May-May are at the rail, Dirk equally aware of the meaning of Brock's maneuver. He moves quickly to the harpoon gun.

144 EXT. SEA - NIGHT ***

Brock's lorcha bears down directly on Dirk's vessel.

145 EXT. BRIDGE - BROCK'S LORCHA - NIGHT

as it ploughs forward. Gorth is at the helm, Brock looking on calmly. Camera zooms back to include the prow, from which a giant iron spike, one-foot square, juts out six feet at the water line. The camera moves in and holds on the deadly ramming spike.

146 EXT. MIDSHIPS - DIRK AND MAY-MAY - NIGHT ***

waiting at the harpoon gun. Past them, Brock's lorcha continues to bear down directly at them, growing larger with every moment.

147 BROCK'S LORCHA ***

looming large, speeding forward.

148 DIRK ***

splashes the cloth-wrapped harpoon in the gun with more oil. Brock's lorcha speeds nearer, moving in to ram them amidships. Dirk lights a torch from the lamp that burns overhead and puts it to the harpoon, which bursts into flame. He aims the harpoon, fires it.

149 EXT. SEA - THE TWO LORCHAS - NIGHT ***

as the burning harpoon rises in the air, misses Brock's lorcha, and falls into the sea.

150 DIRK ***

hurriedly turns and grabs the remaining harpoon. Past him, Brock's lorcha comes on relentlessly. May-May is hardly breathing.

151 EXT. SEA - NIGHT ***

as Brock's lorcha comes in and rams Dirk's ship, squarely amidships.

152 EXT. MIDSHIPS

as the giant iron ram narrowly misses Dirk and May-May and crashes into the superstructure above them, breaking it up like a match box.

153 ORLOV

as wreckage falls on him, knocking him down. A heavy section falls directly on his left hand, and crushes it. Fong grabs the wheel, and turns it with all his strength.

154 EXT. SEA - NIGHT ***

as Brock's lorcha recoils, and Dirk's lorcha, responding to Fong, moves away a few yards.

155 EXT. BRIDGE - BROCK'S LORCHA - NIGHT

Gorth swings the helm in deadly pursuit.

156 EXT. SEA - NIGHT ***

as Brock's lorcha bears down on the smaller ship again.

157 DIRK

Dirk lights and fires the last harpoon.

158 EXT. SEA - THE LORCHAS - NIGHT ***

as the flaming harpoon arches into the air, and strikes squarely in the center of Brock's mainsail. The powder inside the oil-soaked padding explodes.

159 EXT. BRIDGE - BROCK'S LORCHA - NIGHT

as exploding gunpowder and sparks shower down on Brock and Gorth, but mainly on Gorth. His hair and shirt catch fire. As Brock lurches to the wheel, shoves Gorth aside, and grabs the helm, his mainsail goes up in flames, and the other sails catch fire.

160 EXT. BRIDGE - DIRK'S LORCHA - NIGHT ***

as Fong leans on the wheel, and heels the lorcha away from Brock's.

161 EXT. SEA - NIGHT ***

Black water widens between the two lorchas, and they move in different directions. Brock's lorcha is helpless, its sails blazing brightly in the night. Dirk's lorcha continues to move away from it.

162 DIRK AND MAY-MAY ***

watch Brock's lorcha wallowing in the distance, its sails burning beautifully in the darkness. May-May looks at Dirk with pride and admiration, seizes his hand, and kisses it joyfully. He pulls it away.

DIRK
Will you stop that, you miserable heathen -- ?

MAY-MAY
You are fantastical, Tai-Pan!

DIRK
When will you learn to speak properly -- it's fantastic.

MAY-MAY
Oh, yes -- !

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED:

FONG'S VOICE
Tai-Pan -- see Captain -- !

They turn and see Orlov on the deck, unconscious, bleeding heavily, and they hurry to him.

163 EXT. SEA AND COAST - DAY - MED. LONG SHOT ***

The lorcha sails toward a Struan clipper, Thundercloud, lying at anchor off the coast at the rendezvous point, a great marble pagoda, gleaming in the sunlight.

164 EXT. CLEARWATER BAY - DAY ***

as it was in 1840. Two Struan clippers, China Cloud and Thunder Cloud, lie at anchor in the uninhabited bay.

165 EXT. THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

Cudahy, the Mate, is on the bridge. Around and below him, armed sailors are on guard.

166 INT. HOLD - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

Dirk, Robb and Cullum stand among glittering stacks of silver that fill the hold. Robb and Cullum are staggered.

ROBB
I can't believe my eyes ---

CULLUM
There isn't this much silver in the Bank of England...!

ROBB
We're saved! More than saved. But how, Dirk -- ? Where?

Dirk tosses a silver brick in the air, catches it, and starts out.

DIRK
Come on.

They follow him.

167 thru 169 CLOSEUP - THE SILVER BRICK - DAY

on a table in Dirk's cabin. The camera eases back to hold a Bible. Fixed to its inside cover with sealing wax are the four broken half-coins Dirk has taken from Jin-Qua.

In a wider angle, Dirk shoves the open Bible across the table toward Robb and Cullum.

ROBB
(aghast)
But those 'favors' could be anything, anything at all. You've been cheated, Dirk ---

DIRK
Cheated? No. Outsmarted, maybe. But not cheated. We have two million pounds of silver, without interest, without even a signature on a note. The terms may be high, but we haven't been cheated. You said it yourself -- we've been more than saved. This will make us the richest company in the orient, and that without the opium trade....

He looks at them coldly, as they consider his words and are forced to agree, and then picks up the silver brick and places it on top of the open Bible.

DIRK
But I'm taking this only on certain conditions. One of them is that when or if either of you become Tai-Pan, you'll honor each of these coins....

Both Robb and Cullum are startled.

ROBB
When or if -- if either of us becomes Tai-Pan? I don't understand.

Nor does Cullum.

DIRK
The Noble House has five years to repay this loan. Those same five years will be the first in the life of Hong Kong. Whether we like it
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

167 thru 169 CONTINUED:

DIRK (Cont'd)
or not, our destinies are as intertwined as the lion and the dragon in the flags that fly above our ships.

He paces the cabin, energy flowing from him, and they listen, hypnotized.

DIRK
Willie Longstaff's very clever beneath that sheep's face of his, but governor-generals change with the prevailing winds in London. London -- Whitehall -- that's where the power game is played. To protect Hong Kong, to protect ourselves, we need a voice in Parliament, a voice that can't be bought by anyone who can outbid us. I propose to be that voice....

ROBB
You'd go into Parliament?

DIRK
Yes. We can afford to buy a seat now. Do you doubt I can hold my own in the House of Commons?

Robb considers it.

ROBB
No.

DIRK
And you, Cullum. You're from the university. Would they consider me a country bumpkin?

CULLUM
(sincerely)
No, father. You'll more than hold your own. But I still don't understand ---

DIRK
I want to go as soon as the British flag flies over Hong Kong. I want
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

167 thru 169 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK (Cont'd)
five years there, five years in which to set us up forever. I want you to be Tai-Pan, Robb, for at least two of those years. I'll be going back and forth. I'll help you.

Robb is staggered, alarmed.

ROBB
I couldn't! I'm not the man for it!

DIRK
Robb, you've more balls than you know! For God's sake, do it, man! Be it! You're one of the best traders in the Orient. I tell you, you can do it.

ROBB
I've promised Sarah we're going home. You know she hates it here. I've promised her.

Cullum watches the struggle, fascinated.

DIRK
You owe me, Robb. You owe it to the Noble House. Two years, in which you'll be Tai-Pan. No one has the right to keep you from that, not even Sarah. Especially Sarah. Two years, and then you can keep your promise and go home with a million free and clear in your pocket, and Sarah can live the rest of her life like the Queen's first cousin....

Robb wavers.

ROBB
Only two years? You swear it?

DIRK
I give you my word on this Bible, and I'll keep it. Give me two years to train Cullum to succeed you --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

167 thru 169 CONTINUED: (3)

DIRK (Cont'd)
(he turns on Cullum)
for the next three.

CULLUM
(stunned)
You don't mean it, Father -- how do you know I can be Tai-Pan in two years, or ever?

DIRK
I don't. But I think you can. Robb's two years will give us time to find out.

Cullum's first excitement and pride give way to resentment.

CULLUM
I see...And if I can't?

DIRK
We'll have to make other arrangements.

CULLUM
(bitterly)
The Noble House always comes first. You'd sacrifice me, or Robb, or anyone, for it, wouldn't you?

DIRK
And myself as well.

ROBB
You're less than fair, Cullum. Your father was a ragged sailor when he came here. With no more than his own hands and brain -- and what the Chinese call joss -- he built the Noble House, stone by stone. Of course, it's everything to him.

DIRK
Turn it around, lad, we're nothing without it.

(CONTINUED)

167 thru 169 CONTINUED: (4)

CULLUM
(unconvinced)
You'd actually kill anyone who threatened it, wouldn't you?

DIRK
I might not kill him, but I'd make damn sure he couldn't harm us.

His feeling of rejection makes Cullum reckless.

CULLUM
Now I know why you're hated throughout the China seas.

ROBB
(startled and embarrassed)
Cullum -- !

DIRK
(calm)
Am I?

CULLUM
Yes!

DIRK
And you think you know why?

CULLUM
Yes.

DIRK
No. You'll never know until you're Tai-Pan, and that you'll never be unless you're willing to risk -- everything....Now then, what are you to be, a nobody, or number one? Do you want it, the wealth and the glory and the power...?

Cullum struggles with himself, divided, wanting to reject and hurt Dirk, and at the same time anxious to please him, and dazzled by the prospect.

CULLUM
Yes....

(CONTINUED)

167 thru 169 CONTINUED: (5)

DIRK
Good!
(he sweeps the silver brick off the Bible, and holds the book out to them)
Then put your hands on this book, both of you, and swear....

Robb obeys, and Cullum follows suit.

DIRK
Swear you'll honor the obligations of these coins, swear you'll take over my commitments to Jin-Qua and whoever succeeds him, swear that you commit the Noble House to the total support of Hong Kong and that our headquarters will never leave here...Go on.

ROBB
(after hesitating)
I swear.

CULLUM
(hoarsely)
I swear.

Dirk shuts the book sharply, satisfied. Robb looks at him, and when he speaks it is not without long hidden aggression.

ROBB
You'll have to go to England alone, Dirk. You'll never get into Parliament with a Chinese wife, or even a Chinese mistress....

DIRK
(quietly)
I know....

Cullum is puzzled, intrigued.

170 A DOOR

slams shut, the BEDROOM DOOR in ROBB'S HOUSE in Macao - DAY.

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED:

Sarah stands with her back against the door, pale with disappointment and anger. There is a pounding on the door from outside the bedroom.

ROBB'S VOICE
Sarah -- please -- try to understand ---

SARAH
I understand you've broken your promise again. I understand your brother has had his way with you again. I understand you're a weakling, Robb...Go away....

171 INT. HALL TO BEDROOM - MACAO HOUSE - DAY - ROBB

He tries the knob hopelessly.

ROBB
Let me in, please.

SARAH'S VOICE
I said, go away.

ROBB
You won't leave me, will you? You won't go back alone? It's only for two more years....

172 SARAH

smiles bitterly.

SARAH
No, I won't leave you, Robb. If I do, you'll do precisely what your brother did, won't you? Take a Chinese whore into your house...

173 ROBB

takes it.

ROBB
Thank you. It'll be of great help to me. I couldn't do it without you...It's very good of you, Sarah.

174 CLOSEUP - A PORTRAIT OF MAY-MAY - DAY

in formal Chinese clothes, pensive, perhaps a little sad, but lovely. The painting is in the INT. QUANCE'S STUDIO - MACAO, one among many stacked and hung everywhere.

Dirk and Quance study the portrait. Dirk is moved by it, but he speaks brusquely.

DIRK
It's taken you long enough. Send it over today.

QUANCE
It's one of my best. And I will send it, Tai-Pan, together with my bill.

DIRK
Never mind a bill. You've been paid. One hundred pounds.

It is an old game they play with each other. Dirk moves away, looking at other pictures. There is one of the debate on the beach, Sc. 59, etc., and another of Shevaun and Mary walking on the beach, Sc. 66.

QUANCE
It took me longer than I expected, a great deal of work, Tai-Pan. Another twenty-five pounds would be a most gracious gesture.

DIRK
In a pig's pizzle, Quance. What makes you such a scrounger?

QUANCE
Rich people never understand that poor people never really have enough money for their actual needs, never mind the goodies. Ten pounds?

DIRK
No.

They come to a covered painting on an easel.

DIRK
Work in progress?

(CONTINUED)

174 CONTINUED:

QUANCE
Yes. A commission, actually.

DIRK
May I see?

QUANCE
Yes, for ten pounds.

DIRK
You're unbelievable.

QUANCE
And you're ignorant of the cost of paint and brushes, with respect.

DIRK
Not to mention the cost of whiskey and brandy, and Mrs. Fotheringill's genteel young ladies of pleasure.

QUANCE
True. Never mind, it isn't ready to be looked at.

DIRK
I'll pay.

QUANCE
Done. You won't regret it, actually.

He draws the cloth away, and reveals an almost finished and breathtakingly beautiful female nude, lying on her side, with her back to the viewer, her face obscured by her long red hair. Dirk is not unimpressed.

DIRK
Very good...Is she one of Mrs. Fotheringill's young ladies? If she is, life has improved in Macao.

QUANCE
No. The lady's most respectable. She simply wants to be able to remember herself as she is now when she's old and gray.

DIRK
Who is she?
(Quance shakes his head)
Another ten pounds?

174 CONTINUED: (2)

QUANCE
Don't tempt me, Squire. I gave my word...But, for ten pounds I can say that she's a fairly recent arrival, and is as beautiful as I've painted her.

Dirk nods thoughtfully. He knows it's Shevaun.

DIRK
And does she pose for you -- like that?

QUANCE
She's a remarkable young woman, definitely in advance of our times. Besides, an artist is like a doctor, beyond ordinary rules of behavior.

DIRK
In that case, it won't matter if she catches cold.

Quance shrugs and covers the painting.

DIRK
If you need money, Quance, I'll give you a hundred pounds to judge the gowns at the ball after the auction.

QUANCE
And get myself de-balled by all the losing ladies? Never!...On the other hand, be a prince, and make it two hundred, in view of the danger.

DIRK
Done.

QUANCE
Thank you! I shall judge a great many bottoms and squeeze a great many tits on the strength of a great many half-promises...Better still, it will help me get on with my project. Mrs. Fotheringill is establishing a branch of her riding
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

174 CONTINUED: (3)

QUANCE (Cont'd)
academy on Hong Kong. Keep it to yourself, but I want to spend two months living in it, and that's her exact and exorbitant price.

DIRK
Two months in a brothel?

QUANCE
Painting, Tai-Pan, painting. I give you my word.

Dirk nods skeptically.

175 EXT. HONG KONG BEACH AND HARBOR - DAY - HIGH SHOT ***

from the knoll. There are a number of ships moored in the harbor, including Thunder Cloud. The Chinese fishing village has grown in size, and there are more sampans to be seen. Down below, groups of traders are moving among the subdivided lots and tracts.

DIRK'S VOICE
We'll take lots 14 to 20 on the waterfront, 7, 8, 10 and 12 in the town, two of which we might give to the church....

176 EXT. KNOLL - DAY

where Dirk and Cullum, with a picnic lunch and a map of the island, are sitting on a grassy rise. Dirk is chewing a chicken leg.

DIRK
...another three or four in the Clearwater Bay area, and, of course, all this....

CULLUM
(troubled)
Brock has sent word that he'll be bidding for this, too.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Has he now? Well, he can't have it. At any price.

CULLUM
You mean you won't let him outbid you, no matter how high he goes?

DIRK
No.

CULLUM
Is it worth it, Tai-Pan?

DIRK
Yes, by God, it's mine. It's been mine from the beginning, and one day it'll be yours. Eat, lad.

He himself takes more food with gusto. Cullum watches him, then speaks his mind.

CULLUM
(carefully)
We've made our bargain, Tai-Pan, but to be honest with you, I'm not certain I want to live in China, when my time is up.

DIRK
Where would you rather live? In England?

CULLUM
Yes. Things are happening there, important things. There's a movement, the Chartists, that's fighting for a better life for ordinary people.

DIRK
Radicals?

CULLUM
Yes, if it's radical to want decent pay for decent working time, to get children out of the mines and factories.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
(he nods)
That's fair enough. Are you mixed up with them?

CULLUM
I agree with them. All my friends do. The movement needs leaders, educated men. Before the plague, I'd made up my mind to join them completely as soon as I'd finished school.

Dirk studies him, seeing a new side of his son.

DIRK
I'll not stand in your way -- when you've given me your three years. You'll have money then, and money is power. You're a grown man. Use it any way you like.

CULLUM
You mean that?

DIRK
Of course. I'll tell you more. When I'm in Parliament, I'll see what I can do to help your friends.

Cullum is excited, grateful, guilty.

CULLUM
Thank you, Father. Thank you very much. I've misjudged you -- I'm sorry.

DIRK
Never mind that. Eat....

177 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY - GORDON CHEN

is hurrying up the hillside, worried and breathless, toward the knoll.

178 RESUME 176

Cullum has obeyed, and is eating. Dirk is looking at him thoughtfully.

DIRK
(deliberately)
You've been here three months now. Do you not feel the need of a woman?
(as Cullum looks at him, startled)
Or have you had one without my knowing it?

CULLUM
(embarrassed)
No.

DIRK
Are you a virgin?

CULLUM
No...I've been to -- a whorehouse.

DIRK
No need for that anymore. You can afford a mistress now.

CULLUM
A Chinese girl, you mean? I've heard you can buy them, like slaves. I couldn't do that. I'm against slavery.

DIRK
So am I. You give them their freedom from the start. And when it's finished, you provide for them in a decent fashion.

CULLUM
(curious)
You've done that?

DIRK
Yes.

CULLUM
Well -- I couldn't -- fornicate with a Chinese. They don't seem... clean to me.

(CONTINUED)

178 CONTINUED:

DIRK
(hooting)
Not clean? When most Englishmen are lousy, as you were when you came here? Never bathe, and have to sniff perfume all day to cover the stink of women and men alike? The Chinese were civilized when we lived in burrows and painted ourselves blue.

CULLUM
(holding his ground)
I'm sure you're right, and I enjoy taking a bath every day now, but I think I'll wait.

DIRK
Suit yourself. But if it's only white girls you fancy, there's just one decent house in Macao. That's Mrs. Fotheringill's, and even there you'd better wear a sheath.

CULLUM
(with dignity)
Thank you.

He tries to eat, but he has lost his appetite. He looks at Dirk, who has resumed eating and drinking, and dares to ask:

CULLUM
You have a Chinese mistress, don't you?

DIRK
Yes.

CULLUM
Did you buy her?

DIRK
Yes.

CULLUM
For how much?

(CONTINUED)

178 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
None of your business. But when you're ready, I'll tell you how to go about it ---

He sees Gordon Chen approaching from behind Cullum, then stop and wait respectfully some distance away; he rises and goes toward him, the camera going with him.

Gordon, breathless, bows.

GORDON
Forgive me, Mr. Struan. Mr. Brock says he wants to see you, right away, importantly.

DIRK
I know...Tell him to come aboard Thunder Cloud in an hour. Thank you.

GORDON
Thank you, sir.

He turns away.

DIRK
Just a moment, Gordon...Would you like to have a business of your own, here on Hong Kong?

Gordon is speechless with surprise.

179 CULLUM

out of earshot, is watching them curiously.

180 DIRK AND GORDON

Gordon recovers, and answers seriously.

GORDON
Oh, yes, sir! There will be many opportunities here, if one had even a small amount of money....

(CONTINUED)

180 CONTINUED:

DIRK
How would you like a credit of fifty thousand dollars?

GORDON
(staggered)
That would be a huge amount, sir!
(he pulls himself together)
At what interest, sir?

DIRK
No interest. I'll be a silent partner. You take a fourth of the profits, I take the rest.

GORDON
(straight-faced and earnest)
Oh, that would be very fair, sir. Very generous. But if I were to have two-thirds and you one-third, that would assist me to increase your profit considerably. Very considerably.

Dirk is enjoying his Chinese son.

DIRK
(smiling)
We'll be equal partners.

GORDON
(genuinely)
Mr. Struan, how can I ever thank you?

DIRK
With considerable profit.

He studies Gordon's elated face, and comes to a decision.

DIRK
(calling)
Cullum -- ! Come here....

181 CULLUM

rises, and goes toward them, puzzled.

182 DIRK AND GORDON

as Cullum joins them. Controlling his excitement, Gordon bows politely.

DIRK
(deliberately)
It's time you two knew each other -- you're brothers. Cullum -- Gordon. Cullum is older, by a year....

Dirk watches them both keenly. Gordon is still frozen in his bow. Finally he straightens, dazed. Cullum is the first to recover from the shock, and is amazed to realize that he is not actually shocked or outraged.

CULLUM
(genuinely)
I'm very happy to meet you, Gordon.
(he puts out his hand)
We must get to know each other, really.

Still dazed, Gordon lets his hand be shaken.

GORDON
Yes. I would like that very much.

He is fighting back tears as he turns to Dirk.

GORDON
Mr. Struan -- I -- thank you, Mr. Struan...Thank you...I've waited all my life -- I never dared to hope ---

DIRK
You're not to call me Mr. Struan, ever again, do you hear?

GORDON
Yes, Tai-Pan....

He bows deeply, turns and hurries away.

183 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY - GORDON

almost running down the hill, the tears he has been holding back now streaming down his face.

184 and 185 EXT. BRIDGE - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

at anchor in Hong Kong harbor. Dirk and Cullum are watching Brock as he comes aboard and climbs up to the bridge. Brock reaches them, but has eyes only for Dirk, his rage, hatred and triumph all visible but under tight control. He looks at Dirk almost greedily for signs of despair, sees none, then goes to direct attack.

BROCK
I've come to be paid. If thee can't pay up, get off this ship.

DIRK
(mildly)
I have until noon, I believe. Still, if you must have it now, may I see our sight drafts, please?

Brock looks at him suspiciously, then warily takes the notes out of his pocket. Cullum looks on, fascinated.

BROCK
Eight hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds. Let's see thy banker's draft, if thee has one.

DIRK
I haven't any.
(as Brock reacts)
We decided to pay in cash.

BROCK
(stunned)
Cash? You're mad -- !

DIRK
No. There it is....

He points to the deck below, where a large tarpaulin covers a sizable deck cargo. Sailors are standing by.

186 EXT. DECK - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

The Mate, Cudahy, is looking up at Dirk, on the bridge. At Dirk's signal, he gives the order to the sailors.

CUDAHY
Off with it -- !

(CONTINUED)

186 CONTINUED:

They rip away the canvas. Stacks of silver bricks come into view, catching the sun.

187 EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Brock gapes at the gleaming stack of bricks below.

DIRK
It's all been weighed, but I'll lend you a scale if you want to check it. And you've got until noon to get it off my ship....

He reaches out and takes the notes out of Brock's hand. Then realization comes to Brock.

BROCK
What have thee done to me, God rot thee? I'll have every pirate in Asia after me!

DIRK
Yes, I'm afraid you will. How's Gorth? I hear he had an accident -- set himself on fire....

Brock pulls himself together. Cullum is looking at them both, caught up in the almost tangible waves of hatred that pulse out from the two men.

BROCK
(quietly)
I'll kill thee, Struan. I swear to God, I'll kill thee yet....

188 TWO CHINESE - DAY

naked to the waist, one with a fighting spear, the other carrying a fighting hatchet in each hand, circle each other, waiting for an opening. Then, in a flurry of action, they launch themselves against each other. But neither is hit, there is no blood. They begin again.

189 thru 192 EXT. DANCE FLOOR - HONG KONG - DAY

Some distance from the shore, in a large grassy plot, a large wooden dance floor has been laid, with not one but two band-

(CONTINUED)

189 thru 192 CONTINUED:

stands and more than enough room for tables and serving counters. On the grass surrounding the dance floor are trestle tables, tents, pavilions and marquees, through which a colorful crowd of traders, their wives and children are promenading.

On the dance floor itself, the two Chinese are one of a dozen pairs demonstrating various aspects and forms of the martial arts. But it is a bloodless demonstration and consequently too tame for most of the large crowd of Europeans present.

The majority of the spectators watching the performance are children, except for the Chinese villagers and fishermen perched above on the nearby rocky hillside. The Europeans stroll, chat, eat, drink: it's a festive day, a holiday, rich in promise of excitement to come.

Gordon is in charge of the demonstration. He strikes a gong. The dozen pairs of fighters bow to little or no applause, and run off. Another group, differently armed, come on and go to work. Gordon, aware that the entertainment is not holding its audience, is disappointed. He looks toward Dirk, who is an interested spectator, and their eyes meet. Dirk nods to Gordon with wry understanding, and apology for his fellow Europeans.

Shevaun, Mary, Cooper, Horatio, Glessing and Quance approach Dirk. Seeing them, he waits for them to reach him, very much aware of Shevaun, as she is of him.

193 GROUP SHOT - ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Brock, his wife -- a handsome, hard-faced woman -- and their daughter, Tess, a pretty eighteen-year-old, have come onto the floor. Brock realizes they are moving toward Dirk.

BROCK
(abruptly)
Not that way.

He turns away. Mrs. Brock sees Dirk and the group that surround him, and reacts shrewdly.

MRS. BROCK
You'll only have to speak to him later.

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED:

BROCK
That'll be time enough.

Obediently, they follow him.

194 GROUP SHOT

Dirk, Shevaun, Mary, Cooper, Horatio, Glessing, and Quance.

SHEVAUN
Do you understand what they're doing, Tai-Pan? It seems just pretending.

DIRK
The Chinese believe that if you can do a thing to perfection, there's no point in shedding blood to prove it.

GLESSING
Not a patch on a real prize-fight, though. All jump around and face-making. I'm betting on the sailor today, naturally. Care to back the marine?

DIRK
Yes. A hundred pounds?

GLESSING
(startled, disgruntled)
Done, done.

SHEVAUN
Why aren't we allowed to see the fight? You men are nothing less than medieval! Don't you think so, Mary?

MARY
I don't want to see it. I see little difference between prize-fighting and bear-baiting -- or dog fights.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

SHEVAUN
I know. It's just being excluded that I resent. It's so stupidly childish.
(as all the men but Dirk laugh)
And so are you -- !

There is more laughter. Only Mary sees that Dirk and Shevaun are looking at each other.

195 INT. AUCTION PAVILION - DAY

Cullum and a group of Portugese and Chinese clerks are preparing for the auction. Behind the auctioneer's pedestal there is a very large scale map, with every lot numbered and outlined in color.

Gorth Brock comes in, dressed for the occasion, tense with thinly disguised anticipation. He whistles sharply to get Cullum's attention, and does.

CULLUM
Yes -- ? Oh, we haven't met but your name is Brock, isn't it? I'm Struan.

GORTH
Are you a fool to think I don't know that?
(he reaches into his pocket and brings out a paper)
Here -- these are the lots Brock and Company will be bidding on.

CULLUM
(keeping his temper)
I can't take that. If you want those lots, bid when they come up.

GORTH
Then here's something you can take -- you have to take.

He stuffs his list away, brings out a banker's draft, and shoves it at Cullum.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED:

GORTH
This will be my father's first bid on the knoll -- a hundred thousand pounds. Go on, take it. It's a banker's draft, as good as money. Take it, I said....

CULLUM
(startled)
You're bidding a hundred thousand on the knoll?

GORTH
And more, if it's needed. We've made up our minds, over at Brock and Company. Go on, take it....

Cullum, worried, takes the draft.

196 EXT. DANCE FLOOR - DAY

The women and children are gone now, and only men are present. A ring has been set up in the center of the floor, surrounded by chairs and benches. All these are full, with traders and officers, and behind them sailors and marines stand, jammed together, excited. On the hillside, the Chinese watch in even greater numbers. In the ring, a battle-scarred Bosun calls the two fighters together.

197 THE RING
and
198 where the two fighters come to the Bosun, burly, hard-faced, ring-marked, shaven-headed.

BOSUN
(to the crowd)
Your Excellency, Captain Glessing, Your Honors, a fight to the finish between Seaman Jem Weaver, champion of the South China fleet ---

He is interrupted by cheers from the sailors and jeers from the marines.

BOSUN
-- and Lance-Corporal Bart Baker, champion of the Royal Marines....

Again the tide of cheers and catcalls.

199 GROUP SHOT

Dirk, Longstaff, Glessing, others.

LONGSTAFF
Very kind of you, Captain, to give us this show. I'm most grateful.

GLESSING
Nothing like a good clean sporting event, to mark an occasion, I always say.

LONGSTAFF
Quite right. Can't wait for the day when we have fox hunting here.

GLESSING
Island's rather small for that, Your Excellency. Bit pokey for a first class hunt, you know.

LONGSTAFF
Yes, I suppose so. But one can always make do in a good cause, don't you think?

Dirk listens, deadpan.

There is a roar from the crowd.

200 thru 209 FIGHT SEQUENCE - TO BE DESIGNED

as the two men fight bare-fisted according to the London prize-ring rules, an unbelievably brutal and bloody encounter, in which both men have their noses broken, their eyes closed, their knuckles smashed, their bodies bruised, all in complete contrast to the earlier demonstration of the Chinese martial arts. In the end, each man, beaten to a pulp by the other, is almost helpless, and the fight is a draw, as they manage to come out for a final round, but fall without being able to strike a blow, and lie on the blood-stained dance floor, unconscious.

But before this occurs, the fight is INTERCUT with:

210 thru 214 REACTIONS

of the crowd, from Dirk, Longstaff and Glessing, Brock and Gorth, other traders, and sailors and marines, and:

215 thru 218 SHEVAUN AND QUANCE

who enter unnoticed at the rear of the crowd, with Shevaun dressed in male clothing. Quance is nervous at first, but is soon caught up in the fight. Shevaun is nervous, too, but excited and triumphant. But as the fight goes on, and she sees a much more brutal sight than she has imagined, her feelings change to shock, distaste, horror and finally to actual nausea. In the end, Quance is not aware of her flight, nor is anyone else in the yelling, bloodlusting crowd, as she runs out to vomit.

219 INT. AUCTION PAVILION - DAY

Longstaff is behind the pedestal.

LONGSTAFF
And now, gentlemen, I give you our auctioneer, the distinguished Mr. Quance, and I wish you all good fortune....

Quance comes up to join him, and shake hands. Behind them at the map, Cullum looks pale, strained. He looks out and sees:

220 DIRK AND ROBB

waiting for the auction to begin. The camera pans swiftly away from the aisle to Brock and Gorth, grim, expectant.

221 CULLUM

very worried. He hears o.s. laughter from the audience, and reacts to see:

WIDER, Quance has placed a whiskey bottle, a glass, a jug of water and a gavel on the pedestal top, and the crowd is laughing.

QUANCE
Laugh, if you like, gentlemen, but for some of us, it's going to be a long, hard day.
(to Cullum)
Now then, Deputy Colonial Secretary, if you please --
(as Cullum gives him a slip of paper)
Marine lots 1 and 2, to be sold together....

221 CONTINUED:

A VOICE
One thousand pounds ---

QUANCE
One thousand pounds bid -- do I hear fifteen hundred -- ?

222 CLOSEUP - THE MAP - DAY

Every lot but the knoll and one other parcel has been sold.

QUANCE'S VOICE
(hoarse)
Sold at two thousand eight hundred pounds, parcel number 203....

WIDER, Cullum eliminates the last parcel, leaving only the knoll. Cullum is very pale, tense. Quance's bottle is almost empty. He pours the last of it into his glass.

223 DIRK AND ROBB

Dirk grim, Robb tense.

224 BROCK AND GORTH

equally tense.

225 QUANCE AND CULLUM

QUANCE
And that, gentlemen, concludes the auction....

He drains his glass.

226 ANOTHER ANGLE

DIRK
The sale's not finished....

BROCK
That's right!

QUANCE
I'm sorry -- ?

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED:

DIRK
The knoll, man. Put the knoll up. Lot 204....

Cullum winces. Quance looks puzzled.

QUANCE
I'm sorry, Tai-Pan, I don't understand. It's already been sold.

Dirk gets up.

DIRK
(softly)
To whom?

Brock reacts, noisily knocking his chair back as he rises, too.

BROCK
What's the swindle? Who's it been sold to?

Quance, frightened, turns to Cullum. Cullum faces Dirk, quietly desperate.

CULLUM
To the Church. For a pound a year. In perpetuity.

The room goes silent.

DIRK
(almost in a whisper)
You sold my land -- to the church?

CULLUM
Yes. I arranged it with his Excellency before the auction.

Both Dirk and Brock turn to Longstaff.

LONGSTAFF
(puzzled)
That's correct. I understood everyone was agreeable. It's a perfect place for a church...Is something wrong?

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED: (2)

Dirk turns and looks at Cullum. Cullum waits to be struck down. Then Dirk turns and walks out of the tent, as everyone, including Cullum -- especially Cullum -- watches him go.

227 INT. DIRK'S CABIN (RESTING CLOUD) - NIGHT

Dirk is dressing for the ball. Cullum comes in, pale, wild-eyed. Dirk turns to him.

CULLUM
(harshly)
It was the only way out of the mess you got us into, because of that god-rotting knoll! You had to have it at any price and you'd have ruined us -- they were going to start at a hundred thousand, and you'd have bid more, more, more, because of your goddamned face, and at the end they'd have stepped out and left us holding a worthless piece of ground that cost us a fortune! We'd have had to go back into the opium trade -- is that what you wanted?

He stops, relieved of his pent-up rage and at the same time appalled by what he has dared to say, and waits, with dignity, for Dirk to hit him. What Dirk thinks or feels at this moment is not apparent.

DIRK
(quietly)
You've not changed for the ball, and you must be there when we greet our guests. We'll talk of this another time....

Cullum gapes at him, surprised, then turns and goes out. Dirk looks after him thoughtfully for a moment, then turns and goes on with his dressing.

There is a tap on the opposite door, and May-May comes in. She watches him for a moment.

MAY-MAY
You have wonderful joss, Tai-Pan... Your eldest son has saved you from
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

227 CONTINUED:

MAY-MAY (Cont'd)
great trouble in the only possible way. And yet you have not lost face, truly, for he is your son, and he has gained more face in one day than he might have in twenty years.

DIRK
I know. He did exactly as I hoped he would when I took him up to the knoll one day and spoke to him about the auction. To tell you the truth -- I'm rather proud of him.

MAY-MAY
You are a devil...Will you tell him?

DIRK
Yes. One day.

MAY-MAY
I see. Don't wait too long...Too bad you have no time now, but you must hurry to the ball, where all the fat white ladies with their fat white bosoms sticking out will all wag their fat white bottoms at you, because they would like you to marry them, and you will enjoy that, won't you?

DIRK
(calmly)
There's a lot to be said for nice fat white bottoms.

MAY-MAY
You are a goat, Tai-Pan. The Tai-Pan of all goats is what you are, and --
(she runs to her door)
and like all goats, you stink!

She slams the door behind her, and locks it. Dirk smiles wryly, knowing that what actually annoys her is that she cannot come to the ball.

228 INT. MAY-MAY'S CABIN (RESTING CLOUD) - NIGHT

May-May claps her hands softly. Two pretty Chinese servant girls hurry in. May-May speaks to them in Chinese.

MAY-MAY (sub-titled)
Now we begin. Quickly, quickly -- !

229 INT. SHEVAUN'S CABIN (YANKEE TRADER) - NIGHT

Close on Shevaun in a whalebone corset, frilled pantaloons and silk stockings, whimpering in agony.

SHEVAUN
No more, please! No more....

In a wider view, she is being squeezed into the corset, her cushioned breasts rising out of the whalebone cups, by her Irish maid, her knee in Shevaun's rump, her capable hands pulling the corset laces without mercy.

MAID
Just a bit more, me darlin'...
Hold your water, hold on...there!

Shevaun, hardly able to breathe, steadies herself against a chair. The Maid snatches up a tape and measures Shevaun's waist.

MAID
(triumphant)
Seventeen and a half inches, by the blessed Saint Mary!

SHEVAUN
(weakly)
I shall faint. I'll faint before the evening's over.

MAID
Make sure you do it gracefully, me darlin', and that everyone's watching.

230 INT. MARY SINCLAIR'S CABIN (LONGSTAFF FRIGATE) - NIGHT

Mary, already dressed, in a jet-black Shantung silk bustled gown, fashionably cut to reveal her bare shoulders and upper breasts, is putting the finishing touches to her hair. The dress looks undeniably expensive, in contrast to her previous wardrobe, and she looks lovely, and she knows it.

231 EXT. POOP DECK - THUNDER CLOUD - NIGHT

Cullum, dressed for the ball, comes out on the poop deck and looks out into the harbor.

232 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - NIGHT - FULL SHOT ***

The sails and bows of every ship in the harbor have been decorated and outlined with lanterns, and the bay seems filled with fairy ships. Ashore, there are lanterns gleaming among the tents and pavilions, and especially on the dance floor, to make a spectacular picture under the deep black canopy of the sky.

233 EXT. POOP DECK - NIGHT

Cullum goes to the edge of the poop deck, and looks down below where Orlov, a lighted punk in his hand, is waiting by the cannon. Cullum nods, and Orlov lights the fuse. Now it can be seen that he has lost his left hand, crushed when Gorth rammed the lorcha, and that a hook is his legacy from the Brock family. The cannon booms.

234 EXT. FORESHORE - NIGHT

where Gordon stands with a lighted taper, a servant nearby. He gives the servant the burning taper, and the man runs out into the darkness.

235 thru 238 FIREWORKS SEQUENCE - TO BE DESIGNED ***

beginning with a tremendous cannonade of firecrackers, followed by fireballs and colored lights, fire wheels and volcanoes, rockets and rivers of fire, and finally a huge flag filling the sky, with a red lion and a green dragon, flaming against the darkness. It dies with a vast explosion. There is a complete silence for a moment, broken by a great cheer that reverberates across the bay from shore to ship, and from ship to ship, and the ball is about to begin.

But before this climax, the sequence has been INTERCUT with the faces of those watching the fireworks -- sailors, traders, children, Chinese, Dirk, May-May, Cullum, Shevaun, Gorth and Brock. Then, once again, the lantern lights glow and flicker against the velvet darkness.

239 EXT. DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT - FULL SHOT

brilliantly lit by lanterns. Now tables and chairs circle the floor, each table decorated with flowers and candles. Farther back there are huge trestle tables covered with food and drink. Neatly uniformed servants, under a hugely fat Major-Domo, scurry among the tables. A Marine band is already playing on one of the bandstands, the Sailors' band waiting its turn. A long line of guests is being received by Dirk, Robb and Sarah, and Cullum, while others are already dancing. At a considerable and respectful distance in the darkness beyond the outdoor ballroom, the Chinese villagers look on.

240 DIRK

seems to be bowing directly into and in danger of drowning in a gargantuan pair of breasts, which even outdo May-May's prediction. In a fuller view, the Stout, Middle-aged Lady and her Husband Dirk has received pass on to Robb, Sarah and Cullum. Mary, followed by her brother Horatio and Glessing, is next in line, and Dirk reacts to her beauty and the richness of her gown.

DIRK
Mary, you're absolutely lovely!
And what a beautiful gown ---

MARY
Thank you, Tai-Pan....

She moves close as if to kiss his cheek, and whispers in his ear.

MARY
If Horatio asks, you lent me the money for it. Please -- ?

DIRK
(puzzled but unruffled)
Of course.

She gives him a dazzling smile and goes on to Robb and Sarah, as Dirk turns to greet the men.

241 THE BROCK FAMILY

next in line. Brock and Gorth are surly, Tess very pretty, glowing. Mrs. Brock moves to avert trouble.

(CONTINUED)

241 CONTINUED:

MRS. BROCK
(hissing)
You've got to do it, so make the best of it, you hear?

BROCK
Shut up.

242 ANOTHER ANGLE

as Horatio and Glessing go on to Robb and Sarah, and the Brock group come up to Dirk. He greets them pleasantly.

DIRK
Welcome, Mrs. Brock. And Tess, you look quite grownup and very pretty.

TESS
(delighted)
Thank you. Thank you very much --
(she hesitates)
Tai-Pan.

Mrs. Brock, annoyed by her use of the title, manages a smile, and moves her away. Brock and Gorth come up. There is no pretense on either side. Short stiff bows, and they move along, the camera going with them. The exchange of greetings between the Brock family and Robb and Sarah is restrained and formal, but the meeting between Cullum and Tess is electric.

243 CULLUM AND TESS

love-struck from this first moment. Cullum pulls himself together.

CULLUM
I'm honored to meet you. Will you honor me with a dance, Miss Brock?

TESS
Oh, yes, indeed, Mr. Struan....

244 RESUME 242

as Mrs. Brock needs no command from Brock to lead Tess away as quickly as possible. Gorth follows, scowling, and Brock gives Cullum the briefest of nods. But Cullum has eyes only for Tess.

245 DIRK

perhaps fortunately, is greeting Shevaun, Cooper and Tillman, and he is startled by her beauty this night.

DIRK
(simply)
I don't know what to say, Shevaun.

SHEVAUN
(radiant, a picture)
Then I've succeeded.

The music has just come to a stop. In its absence, the sound of a glass falling to the floor and shattering can be clearly heard. They look off and see:

246 QUANCE

with a group of fellow celebrants, well on the way to getting drunk, and it is he who has dropped the glass.

QUANCE
Sorry about that.
(he calls out happily)
Don't anyone dance over this way, you'll get slivers in your footsie-tootsies -- !
(he laughs and snaps his fingers)
Boy -- ! Boy, somewhere, a broom and another glass of champers, here -- !

247 RESUME 245

as Dirk realizes there may be trouble ahead. He and the others exchange wry looks.

248 THE DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT - FULL SHOT

It is filled with dancers. The receiving line has ended.

249 CULLUM AND MARY

dancing. But Cullum finds himself looking for Tess. Then he sees:

250 TESS

at a table, under family guard, their attitude quite clear that Tess is not dancing with anyone, especially Cullum.

251 HORATIO AND GLESSING

watching the dancing. Mary and Cullum come into view, and Glessing is entranced with Mary.

GLESSING
I say, Horatio, Mary's absolutely delightful tonight. Beautiful gown she's wearing, too, I must say.

Somehow, Horatio is not as enthusiastic.

HORATIO
Yes....

GLESSING
I'm going to call on her, if I may. With the most serious and honorable intentions, of course.

HORATIO
(absently)
Oh, she's not ready for anything serious yet, George. When she's older, perhaps.

Glessing looks at him, startled.

252 COOPER AND SHEVAUN

dancing, Cooper aware and proud of the attention Shevaun is receiving.

253 DIRK AND LONGSTAFF

watching them. Longstaff looks at him shrewdly.

LONGSTAFF
Marvelous girl, that one. The kind of American who does awfully well in England. Good looks, charm, money, father a Senator, may well be President one day. Wasted out here. Make a good wife for someone going into British politics, actually.

Dirk turns and sees Longstaff grinning at him.

DIRK
Is that so? Most interesting, Willie. And I learned something interesting about you just the other day.

LONGSTAFF
Really?

DIRK
It's what the Chinese call you, the literal meaning of the way they write your name: 'Odious Penis'...

LONGSTAFF
(staggered)
Odious Penis? I don't see it. Longstaff -- odious penis? I don't see it at all, actually.

DIRK
Neither do I, actually. Excuse me ---

He goes off quickly toward Shevaun and Cooper, who have ended their dance.

254 DIRK AND SHEVAUN

dancing a heady waltz, both enjoying it, and each other, both physically stirred more than they have expected or gambled for.

255 thru 258 GROUPS OF PEOPLE watching them, feeling the electricity between them, admiring the male handsomeness and the female beauty of the outstanding couple on the floor. The last cut holds Cooper and Tillman. Cooper is jealous, but tries to hide it.

COOPER
They look well together, don't they.

TILLMAN
(sharply)
Don't be a fool. Why don't you marry her? Her father's willing.

COOPER
There's time.

TILLMAN
Not for you, now that Struan's no longer married.

Cooper turns to him, surprised.

COOPER
Does that mean you'd want her to marry him?

TILLMAN
It would be a brilliant match, but I'm not interested in being swallowed up by The Noble House. And that may happen, if you don't marry her first....She could easily become infatuated with that man, and I'm tired of being a watch-dog. It's time she settled down, with you.

COOPER
(uneasily)
Yes....

259 DIRK AND SHEVAUN

dancing. Dirk sees Gordon on the edge of the dance floor, obviously hoping to gain his attention, and indicates that he sees him.

260 EXT. WHARF - NIGHT

Dirk climbs the gangplank to the Struan clipper Resting Cloud, permanently moored inshore.

261 INT. GANGWAY - RESTING CLOUD - NIGHT

The two servant girls kowtow deeply as Dirk passes them, and goes into his cabin. Behind his back, they look at each other with anticipation.

262 INT. DIRK'S CABIN - RESTING CLOUD - NIGHT

as Dirk comes in and stops short, staggered, as he sees:

May-May, dressed in a violently multi-colored European gown, huge and bustled, her hair in curled ringlets and a feathered hat, her face rouged. All her own rare Chinese beauty is obscured and she looks hideous, a caricature, but, sadly, she does not know it. Smiling radiantly, she twirls and curtseys.

DIRK
(sick)
Oh, my God....

Then he catches himself.

DIRK
It's very nice ---

But it is too little and too late. May-May goes pale, leaving huge scarlet blotches on her stricken cheeks, knowing she has lost immeasurable face before Dirk. Dirk moves to her quickly, guilt-ridden.

DIRK
You look marvelous! We'll go to the ball. I was wrong -- I should have taken you to begin with ---

Too quickly for him to prevent it, she is out of his arms and out of the cabin. Dirk launches himself at the door, tries to open it but is too late before she slides the bolt. He kicks the door down, and plunges through into the other cabin.

263 INT. MAY-MAY'S CABIN - RESTING CLOUD - NIGHT

as Dirk is in time to see May-May finding a stiletto in a sea chest. He dives across the room and seizes her arm a split second before she plunges the dagger into her breast. In a state of absolute shock and hysteria, she fights him insanely, her other hand with its long nails, exaggerated by their metal protectors, clawing for his eyes, but he is able to twist the stiletto from her hand, throw it across the room, and hold her wrists firmly.

DIRK
Listen to me, I was just surprised, that's all! And angry with myself. I love you! I should have taken you, and made all those big fat white women look foolish. We'll go now ---

He lets her go, smiling as convincingly as he can.

He loses it, as she moves away from him, and, before he can prevent her, she deliberately rips her dress away.

DIRK
May-May, please ---

She continues to tear away the offending cloth, the corset, the pantaloons, until she stands before him naked. Dirk has stood by, helplessly. Now May-May falls to her knees, and kowtows deeply. Dirk reaches for her, but she strikes his hand away.

MAY-MAY
It will never be the same with us again. I have shamed you before my servants. This slave begs you to sell her.

DIRK
You're not a slave. You can't be sold.

MAY-MAY
(dully)
This slave has disgraced her master. Sell her. To anyone. To a whorehouse, or to another slave. Sell her.

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED:

DIRK
No! You're not for sale because no one owns you. You haven't disgraced me. You surprised me, that's all! European clothes don't suit you. I like the clothes you wear -- I like you as you are -- !
(as he sees that he has not reached her)
Do you hear me, damn you?

MAY-MAY
(unrelenting)
Sell her -- or kill her -- or beat her. Or she will kill herself.

Their eyes lock. Dirk knows she means it.

264 EXT. BALLROOM - NIGHT - SERVING AREA

where Quance is lying on the ground among the barrels of liquor, snoring drunk. Cullum, Robb and Longstaff look down at him in dismay, while beyond them in the darkness the servants look on, amused.

LONGSTAFF
Rum go, what? I say, rather funny, that, eh?
(he laughs at his own joke, then sobers)
But it's midnight and who's to judge the ladies? Where's the Tai-Pan, anyway?

ROBB
I think you ought to do it, sir.

LONGSTAFF
Never! I'm supposed to keep the peace, not disturb it, my dear chap. No, if the Tai-Pan's not here, you're the man, Robb.

ROBB
No, I couldn't! I'm not good at public...things. Besides, Mrs. Struan would find it too embarrassing.

(CONTINUED)

264 CONTINUED:

LONGSTAFF
(rounding on Cullum)
Then I'm afraid it's you, Deputy Colonial Secretary.

CULLUM
(aghast)
What, me, sir?

LONGSTAFF
Yes, you, sir!

265 thru 267 EXT. DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

The Naval Band strikes up a fanfare, as Cullum walks to the center of the floor, carrying a small, beautifully carved box.

Everyone comes to their feet.

There are quick cuts of Shevaun, of Mary, of other women, excited, blood racing in their veins and coloring their cheeks, at their brilliant best, and Sarah disdainful, contemptuous of them all.

Cullum opens the box, and takes out a banker's draft. He is very nervous, but exerts all his control. He holds the slip of paper high in the air.

CULLUM
(hoarsely)
Ladies -- the grand prize for the most beautiful gown -- one thousand guineas...!

An audible sigh sweeps the floor. The Naval band strikes up a drum roll. The Marine band follows suit. The sound becomes thunderous, reaches a climax.

The Naval drummer strikes his cymbal hard, and then again, and again.

268 INT. MAY-MAY'S CABIN - RESTING CLOUD - NIGHT

May-May, naked, is lying face down on her bunk, and Dirk is whipping her with his belt, bringing the leather down across

(CONTINUED)

268 CONTINUED:

her buttocks hard, but with far less than all his strength, hating it, but knowing that he must actually hurt her if he is to restore her lost face. Teeth clenched, she bears the pain and refuses to cry out.

He stops, goes to the gangway door, and opens it. The two servant girls are crouched on their knees against the wall, terrified. He scowls at them fiercely.

DIRK
Go to your lady. And no more tricks in Tai-Pan house, never! Or I sell you all to the beggars of Canton....

He goes out past them. They scurry into the room and to May-May, still motionless on the bunk.

269 thru 272 EXT. DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

The tension has reached its height. Everyone is looking at Cullum, who has gone completely pale. He licks his dry lips, and then makes his decision.

CULLUM
And I now declare the winner....

He starts across the floor slowly. Shevaun is looking at him. Mary is looking at him. A handsome, well-dressed woman is looking at him.

Cullum moves away from them all, goes directly to the Brock table. As Brock and Gorth stare at him in disbelief, he bows to Tess, who has gone completely crimson, and hands her the check.

CULLUM
I believe this belongs to you, Miss Brock....

She takes it, dazed. Brock and Gorth are paralyzed, Mrs. Brock hugely delighted.

CULLUM
And now may I have the honor of the next dance?

(CONTINUED)

269 thru 272 CONTINUED:

TESS
Oh, yes -- !

She hands the check to her mother, and before Brock and Gorth can move, she has given her hand to Cullum and he is leading her to the floor. There is a roar of applause and cheering, and the Naval Band strikes up a waltz. The Marines join in. The dancing becomes general. Shevaun and Mary are taking it well, and are dancing with Cooper and Glessing, respectively.

Cullum and Tess are both in a dream as they dance.

Dirk comes into the ballroom, looks about, and is staggered when he sees Cullum and Tess dancing. He looks for Robb and finds him. Robb shrugs helplessly.

Dirk turns away, searches for Brock, and sees him, glaring at him across the floor. They look at each other in surmise, suspicion, and bewilderment.

273 INT. BROCK CABIN - ABOARD BROCK SHIP - NIGHT

Tess, in a dressing gown, her face blotched and tear-streaked, is in her mother's arms. Brock, in a rage, has torn her gown to shreds, and now he deliberately tears the banker's draft to strips. Gorth is enjoying the scene.

BROCK
And thee are not to see him again, never....

Mrs. Brock dares his wrath, shrewdly.

MRS. BROCK
And why not? Who will it hurt the most, you or <u>his</u> father?

He looks at her, startled.

274 INT. DIRK'S CABIN - RESTING CLOUD - NIGHT

as Dirk comes in quietly. One small lamp burns, and in its light May-May can be seen in bed, pale but asleep. Dirk looks down at her, tired but relieved.

275 INT. DIRK'S CABIN - RESTING CLOUD - NIGHT

later. Undressed, Dirk comes quietly into bed and puts his arm about her, and her eyes flutter. Still half asleep, May-May comes into his arms and they begin to make love, gently, tenderly, then passionately.

276 DIRK AND MAY-MAY - LATER

as they rest in each other's arms, May-May's eyes closed, Dirk studying her relaxed face. Then she stirs, moves a little, and cries out softly.

DIRK
What is it?

MAY-MAY
(drowsily)
My bottom, she hurts dreadful.

DIRK
Not she. It.

MAY-MAY
(her eyes still closed)
It-shit...You were right to beat me, Tai-Pan, never mind. I was wrong. I lost much face. But you gave it back to me by showing my servants how much pain I could suffer without crying out...

DIRK
(remorseful)
I'm sorry ---

MAY-MAY
No, I was wrong. But never beat me when I am not wrong. For you must sleep some time, and then I would kill you....

Still with her eyes closed, she turns on her side away from him, and drifts off. Dirk looks down at her wearily.

DIRK
It's been a long, hard day....

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

277 thru 287 A MONTAGE OF CIVILIZATION COMING TO HONG KONG and the hurried growth and building of the new colony:

The dance floor and the bandstands are torn down.

In the European enclave, Queenstown, tents are replaced by buildings: homes, shops, taverns, warehouses, godowns, hotels, a jail, a Jockey Club, wharves, offices, Mrs. Fotheringill's brothel, an official Residence. A cricket pitch is laid out.

The Chinese village becomes an incredibly crowded town.

Sampans fill the harbor, and ships crowd it, disgorging traders and their families, relieved at last from life aboard ship; supplies come in; and new people: Portugese, Chinese, Eurasians, workers and artisans and coolies and thieves and whores. A white sailor and two white whores stagger through a village street. Carelessly, the sailor tosses a handful of coins to a crowd of children and beggars.

Cullum and other young men play a cricket match on the new pitch. Beyond the pitch, a long line of coolies bend low under their burdens of building materials.

Flies and maggots cluster on food in open-air markets.

Human and animal waste is dumped in rivers and streams.

The rains come. When they stop, pools of water stagnate. Larvae grow in the pools and puddles, and become mosquitoes...

288 EXT. BROCK HONG KONG GARDEN - NIGHT

Mrs. Brock, in a garden chair, chaperones Cullum and Tess, as they walk together at the far end of the newly landscaped garden.

From a window on the upper floor of the house, Brock looks down at Cullum and Tess with mixed feelings.

289 INT. DIRK'S MAIN ROOM - DIRK'S NEW HONG KONG HOUSE - NIGHT

A gracious room, part Oriental, part European, furnished as richly as the other Struan houses.

(CONTINUED)

289 CONTINUED:

Dirk, too, is at the window, looking down toward the lights of the harbor, and he, too, is thoughtful.

May-May comes into the room, is instantly aware of his mood, and comes to him. She looks up at him for a moment.

MAY-MAY
So -- how long you going to breed about your son and the one-eye devil's daughter?

DIRK
(startled)
Breed?

MAY-MAY
Sorry. Brood.

DIRK
How long is it going to take you to learn English?
(as she bridles)
And I'm not brooding.

MAY-MAY
(shrewdly)
Also, you will not quarrel with him.

DIRK
No. A quarrel would drive him into their greedy, godrotting arms.

MAY-MAY
Good. Very clever man you are.
(she takes his arm fondly)
That is why you are Tai-Pan...Yes, you keep The Noble House together, and everything else is immetesticle.

DIRK
(off balance again)
Imme -- what?

MAY-MAY
(annoyed)
Oh, never mind! I will tell you what to mind. I got a heavy feel-
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

289 CONTINUED: (2)

MAY-MAY (Cont'd)
ing this house is sitting right on a dragon's neck. Why didn't you listen to me and get a feng shui gentleman in before you built it?

DIRK
Feng shui gentleman. Dragon's neck....

He starts to kiss her. She resists.

MAY-MAY
I know a very good one. I think I have him come in after you go to Macao tomorrow.

DIRK
And if this house is sitting on a dragon's neck?

MAY-MAY
Then we move it, naturally -- !

She stands on her toes and kisses him.

290 EXT. BRIDGE - FLYING CLOUD - DAY

Dirk and Cullum face each other.

DIRK
You're a grown man, Cullum. You don't need my consent. But suppose I didn't want you to marry her?

Cullum is deeply troubled.

CULLUM
I don't want to think about that. I want you to agree.

DIRK
I agree with whatever you want. And as a wedding present, I'll build you a house.

(CONTINUED)

290 CONTINUED:

CULLUM
(delighted)
You're wonderful!

DIRK
But you'll need Brock's consent.
Or do you have it already?

CULLUM
(losing his smile)
No. I've -- been waiting.

Dirk studies him with mixed feelings.

DIRK
(carefully)
While you're waiting, you won't discuss any of our affairs with Tess, will you?

Cullum turns on him, and Dirk knows he has made a mistake.

CULLUM
(annoyed)
As it happens, I don't discuss business with Tess, but when is this damned feud ever going to end?

DIRK
Never.

CULLUM
It's got to! They want peace, I'm positive. Father, the old, wild days are gone. This quarrel's got to end.

DIRK
Not as long as Brock and I are alive, I'm afraid.

CULLUM
Then it'll be Gorth and I who'll end it.

DIRK
You really believe you can get along with him?

CULLUM
Yes!....

291 INT. FENCING SALON - ENGLISH CLUB - MACAO - DAY

Cullum is one of a group of young bloods and traders' sons working out in the salon. In the background, two young men are fencing, but Cullum's group is watching a wrestling match. Gorth and Horatio are among them.

One of the wrestlers pins the other, and they finish.

GORTH
Who's next? What about you, Struan? Care to try a fall?

CULLUM
(pleased)
You're a bit heavy for me, but -- yes!

They take off their jackets and strip to the waist, as the others form a circle around them. Gorth is bigger and heavier than Cullum, but Cullum is faster. And Gorth is over-confident, careless, and too eager to actually hurt Cullum. In a match to be designed, Cullum's experience at the martial arts gives him an advantage, and Gorth hits the floor painfully several times. He loses his temper, and goes for Cullum with both lethal fists, and Cullum, surprised, takes a punch before the others close in on Gorth and hold him.

HORATIO
Hold up, Brock! What's the matter with you?

Gorth pulls himself together, and, with an effort, recovers his temper and his face. He stops struggling, and they let him go.

GORTH
Sorry, Struan. Bloody rotten temper I've got. I apologize. Sincerely....

He puts his hand out, and Cullum takes it without hesitation.

CULLUM
Accepted, old man.

GORTH
Thank you...You know, our fathers have been stupid long enough. If I haven't spoiled the chance, I'd like us to end that feud, and be friends. What do you say?

(CONTINUED)

291 CONTINUED:

CULLUM
(delighted)
I'd like nothing better!

292 EXT. CABIN - BROCK'S SHIP - DAY

Brock and Gorth are alone in the cabin, quarrelling.

BROCK
As I hear it, thee made a fool of thyself, but thee always was a fool....

Gorth is furious, but can think of no reply.

BROCK
Any road, thee're to keep thy godrotting hands off him, hear me?

GORTH
Is he so precious to you, then? Is he to marry your daughter, then?

BROCK
I don't know. But I want no trouble till I do know.

GORTH
You'd let Tess marry a Struan?

BROCK
If it suits me, aye.

GORTH
Then you're the fool!

Brock backhands him, hard enough to stagger him and draw blood from his mouth. Gorth grabs a chair and recovers his footing, his hand going instinctively to his knife. He glares at Brock, and wipes his mouth.

GORTH
Don't you ever hit me again.

Brock raises his fist.

BROCK
No?

292 CONTINUED:

GORTH
No! Not unless you're ready to go all the way with me, because I've had enough of you....

Brock tenses, ready to leap across the room. But he doesn't. Looking at his son, he realizes that Gorth is ready for a showdown, and that if there is one, one of them may well kill the other. He takes a deep breath and unclenches his fists, and in that moment Gorth knows he has won.

BROCK
(slowly)
Leave young Struan alone....

GORTH
(harshly triumphant)
Let your daughter marry him if you want. Kiss the Tai-Pan's ass! But I was raised up to hate Struans, any Struans, and I'm not changing now, just because you've grown old....

He flings the chair away, and strides insolently out of the cabin. Brock goes red with unreleased rage.

293 EXT. ENGLISH CLUB OF MACAO - NIGHT

so identified by the brass plate beside the entrance, as Dirk comes out.

A Sedan Chair Bearer moves to him quickly, bows, and gives him a note. Surprised, Dirk reads it:

INSERT - NOTE:

I MUST SEE YOU --
MARY SINCLAIR

RETURN TO SCENE

Dirk does not question the writing.

DIRK
Where go?

(CONTINUED)

293 CONTINUED:

BEARER
You come.

He indicates the sedan chair, goes to it, and Dirk follows him, making certain that he has not forgotten the knife he customarily wears under his coat.

294 EXT. A QUIET STREET - NIGHT

The sedan chair disappears as Dirk goes to a door in a high wall, tries it, and finds it open. He goes through to:

295 EXT. SMALL GARDEN - NIGHT

where an elderly Chinese woman servant, neatly dressed in black trousers and black coat, is waiting for him. She bows, motions him to be quiet, and to follow her. She leads the way toward the house.

296 INT. ROOM - MACAO - NIGHT

as Dirk quietly comes in after the Chinese woman servant. The room is richly furnished, the panelled walls hung with tapestries. Softly, the woman pads to the far wall, carefully moves a strip of panelling, and motions him over. Dirk sees a peephole. Puzzled, he takes her place at the wall, and looks through the hole. He sees:

297 INT. MARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Masked by the peephole, Mary is in bed, naked, beside the similarly nude body of a middle-aged stout Chinese, who is asleep.

298 DIRK

staggered, instinctively recoils from the peephole. The Chinese woman is silently going out of the room. The door shuts behind her.

299 DIRK

later, at the window, looking out into the street. Camera crabs behind him to hold the sedan chair in the street

(CONTINUED)

299 CONTINUED:

below, surrounded by guards. The man Dirk has seen in bed with Mary comes out, richly dressed, obviously a person of wealth and importance, and is helped into the chair. As it is taken swiftly away, he hears, behind him:

MARY'S VOICE
Hello, Tai-Pan....

He turns. Mary is standing in a concealed doorway connecting the room with her bedroom, wearing a thin robe which hides very little. Dirk stares at her in disbelief and disgust.

DIRK
(thickly)
You're crazy....

MARY
(calmly)
No. I'm a whore. I've been one since I was fourteen.

DIRK
I don't believe you.

MARY
Nor your eyes, either?...Come in.

She turns and goes into the bedroom, and he follows her, the camera going with them. Mary pours a glass of brandy, and looks at him provocatively.

MARY
Brandy?
(he shakes his head)
Do you find me attractive?

DIRK
No. You disgust me.

MARY
(calmly)
You don't disgust me, Tai-Pan. You're the only man I admire in all the world. I always have.

Her composure keeps Dirk off balance.

(CONTINUED)

299 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
If Horatio had any idea ---

MARY
(wryly)
Ah, Horatio...Yes, if Horatio had any idea, he'd go mad. But it was Horatio who made me a woman, as the saying goes.

DIRK
(shocked)
Do you want me to kill him?

MARY
Why? It was a long time ago, and we were children, weeping in each other's arms after a flogging. Incest is more common than you may think, Tai-Pan, even in a superior race like ours. Anyway, there's been nothing between us for years...
(she studies him intently, and smiles to herself)
You know, I've often dreamed of our meeting like this. You finding out, seeing me as I really am. Being afraid it might happen, and wanting it to happen....

DIRK
You're mad.

MARY
Why? Because, like you, I enjoy going to bed with Chinese? At fourteen, after Horatio had whetted my appetite and then gone off to school, I didn't know what to do with myself. Then my old Amah showed me how to indulge that appetite, and make money at the same time. Now I own this house and three more. I'm quite well-to-do, Tai-Pan. I get very handsome presents from my clients.

(CONTINUED)

299 CONTINUED: (3)

DIRK
(coldly)
Why did you ask me here?

MARY
Because I also learn things from them. I know something terribly important, and you'd never believe me, unless you saw me like this, and could see how I'd know. And anyway, I knew I had no chance with you. First you were married, and now there's Shevaun Tillman....

DIRK
What in God's name are you talking about?

MARY
(deliberately)
The man who just left is the chief Mandarin of Canton. He's told me that the Emperor is scrapping the treaty, and taking back Hong Kong. And, as a lesson to all the foreign devils, you, especially, he's ordered the destruction of the entire Canton settlement....

DIRK
(startled)
When?

MARY
I don't know. But very soon.

DIRK
(after a pause)
I thank you...But it doesn't change any of this. You've got to go home, get out of China.

MARY
(quietly)
China is my home...Dirk, leave me to my joss. This is the way I want to live. I'll go when I want, in the manner I choose, if I choose.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

299 CONTINUED: (4)

MARY (Cont'd)
And since you'd only hurt me -- and Horatio -- if you did, you'll say nothing about this to anyone, ever, will you?

Dirk accepts the situation.

DIRK
No.

Mary smiles.

MARY
Good. Now stop acting like my late and unlamented father, the Reverend Sinclair, and relax, for God's sake. For this time only, have a brandy with me, Tai-Pan. On the house....

She drops her dressing gown on the floor.

300 EXT. SQUARE OUTSIDE CANTON SETTLEMENT - DAY - HIGH SHOT

filled with bustling Chinese traffic. There is no tension, everything is quite ordinary.

The camera pulls back to the INT. OF THE GREAT DINING HALL OF THE NOBLE HOUSE - DAY

where Horatio Sinclair is looking down through the window at the square beyond the settlement garden wall.

HORATIO
There certainly doesn't seem to be anything in the wind ---

In another view of the room, the great table is filled with traders, tense, worried. Brock and Gorth, Dirk, Robb and Cullum, and Longstaff are in their usual places.

LONGSTAFF
(complacently dismissive)
You know, Tai-Pan, no one would dare to quarrel with your knowledge of the Chinese, but really,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

300 CONTINUED:

LONGSTAFF (Cont'd)
old man, one just can't believe the Emperor would actually go back on his word, to England. We do have a treaty, after all.

Dirk looks at him wryly.

BROCK
Excellency, with respect, and while I'd still like to know where Struan got his information, Hong Kong has been trouble from the beginning, and always will be....

At the window, Horatio comes to attention.

HORATIO
Now that's odd -- ! Your Excellency, Tai-Pan, I'd think you'd better see this ---

Dirk, Longstaff, and the others all move to the many windows looking out on the garden and square.

301 EXT. SQUARE - DAY - HIGH SHOT

The crowd is silently melting away. In a moment, the square is entirely deserted.

302 GROUP SHOT

Dirk, Brock, Horatio and Longstaff, behind them Cullum, Robb and Gorth, as they look down, and see this.

303 thru 313 EXT. SQUARE - TI-SEN'S DEGRADATION SEQUENCE - DAY

First there is the sound of approaching drums, and then the sounds of marching men, all from a distance. They come closer. Then the advance guard of the Emperor's Bannermen come into the square, a picked unit of very tall, very fierce-looking Manchu soldiers. They are followed by drummers and cymbal players, and then more Bannermen, who ring the square. Then comes the Mandarin whom Dirk saw in Mary's bed, in a richly decorated sedan chair, then dignitaries on foot, then Ti-Sen's empty sedan chair, drawn by his four tall women

303 CONTINUED:
thru
313 bearers. But this time he follows it on foot, and in chains...Behind him, the rear guard of Bannermen. And suddenly, behind the lines set up by the giant soldiers, the square fills with Chinese, until it is packed with them.

All this is INTERCUT with the reactions of DIRK and the GROUP, as they look down into the square. Now Mary's client, the Chief Mandarin, hands a scroll to the Herald who stands beside his sedan chair. The Herald opens the scroll, and reads loudly, in Chinese.

At the window above, Horatio interprets:

HORATIO
It's an Imperial edict. The Emperor denounces the treaty and claims Hong Kong...His traitorous cousin Ti-Sen is to be publicly punished, and his property confiscated...All foreigners are ordered out of Canton immediately, and until Queen Victoria comes here in person, and in mourning, and makes a public apology...

LONGSTAFF
(outraged)
Stuff and nonsense!

HORATIO
(continuing)
Fear this, and tremblingly obey...!

LONGSTAFF
And I say stuff and bloody nonsense..!

But it is not that for Ti-Sen. The Chief Bannerman forces him down on his knees, then raises his flail and brings it down mercilessly on Ti-Sen's back, and then again and again. The crowd is silent, only the fat man's screams can be heard. He falls forward on his face into the dust, and the Chief Bannerman continues to scourge him until the cobblestones are red with blood.

In the great room above, the men look on in horror.

At last it is over. Bannermen pick up the fallen Mandarin and tie him to the rear of his own sedan chair, and, at a signal from the Chief Mandarin, the women bearers trot away,

(CONTINUED)

303 thru 313 CONTINUED: (2)

the semi-conscious Ti-Sen forced to keep in step with them. The Chief Mandarin goes, followed by the musicians and the Bannermen. The Chief Bannerman, just before bringing up the rear, turns and points directly at the English Garden and the English factories surrounding it. There is a sound like a moan of delight from the hitherto silent crowd. It waits until the Chief Bannerman strides out of the square and out of view, and then the great crowd launches itself at the garden wall and gates. The gates go down, and the crowd flows over the walls and through the open gates into the garden.

314 INT. GREAT DINING ROOM

as everyone at the windows, Dirk included, heads away and toward the rear doors. Dirk and his group are in the rear of the stampeding traders.

315 and 316 EXT. ENGLISH GARDEN

as the sea of screaming Chinese sweeps toward the various factories, including that of The Noble House. Shots are fired from windows. Rioters fall and are trampled by the others. More and more are shot down, but more keep coming. There is no way to dam the irresistible tidal wave of berserk men.

317 INT. GREAT DINING ROOM

as the mob breaks in and starts destroying the beautiful room.

318 EXT. SETTLEMENT WHARF - DAY ***

where the lorchas of the traders are moored, and where now the traders and their European employees are running for their boats. Behind them smoke and fire are beginning to rise from some of the looted factories. And Chinese are emerging on the wharf in pursuit of the retreating traders. Some are carrying guns and swords now; others are triumphantly bearing on pikes the severed heads of luckless English and Portugese caught inside the buildings.

319 CLOSER

on Dirk, Cullum, Robb, Longstaff and Horatio, making for the lorcha flying the Noble House pennant.

320 EXT. DECK - BROCK LORCHA

where Gorth, already there, and with a musket, is on guard while behind him, Brock is superintending the casting off. Gorth sees:

321 EXT. WHARF

as Dirk and the group run toward the Noble House lorcha. At the same time, a screaming crowd emerges from the wharf exit of the Noble House factory, and comes after them in hot pursuit. Some are firing captured muskets.

322 GORTH

with Dirk and the others in view on the wharf, deliberately takes aim at Dirk. The camera comes in close to focus through his sights, which hold first on Robb, then Cullum, and finally on Dirk. Gorth fires. He misses Dirk, but hits Longstaff in the shoulder. The camera returns to its previous position, as Gorth puts the musket down, and takes another from the stack beside him. No one has seen him shoot at Dirk.

323 EXT. WHARF

where Dirk, with Longstaff over his shoulder, and the others run to the lorcha, and climb aboard. On deck, Orlov and other sailors are firing at the oncoming mob.

324 ESTUARY AND WHARF - DAY - A LITTLE LATER - FULL SHOT ***

as all the lorchas sail away from the wharf at various speeds and distances. On land behind them, the English settlement goes up in flames.

325 EXT. DECK - NOBLE HOUSE LORCHA - DAY ***

Longstaff, bleeding and in pain, is being supported by Dirk and Horatio as they and the others look off at the burning settlement.

LONGSTAFF
(weakly)
They'll pay, Tai-Pan. You'll get it all back. You'll see....

(CONTINUED)

325 CONTINUED:

DIRK
(grimly)
Thank you, Willie.

But Longstaff has fainted.

326 EXT. BOGUE - DAY - FULL SHOT ***

A fleet of a half dozen British frigates, a flagship man-o-war, and a steamship, the Nemesis, are methodically shelling the line of forts that guard the main approaches to Canton. The forts are firing, too, but their guns are fixed, and their shells miss the easily maneuvered British ships, while the British broadsides are murderously effective.

327 EXT. DECK - THE NEMESIS - DAY

where Dirk is watching Longstaff, his shoulder bandaged and his arm in a sling, striding up and down triumphantly.

LONGSTAFF
Her Majesty the Queen come in mourning, is it? We'll give you mourning, you poxy swine ---

Dirk is dourly amused. The Nemesis fires a deafening salvo.

LONGSTAFF
Armed steamships, Tai-Pan! There's our future. What do you think of this fighting lady?

Dirk looks up at the air-fouling smokestack.

DIRK
I hate her, the bloody, stinking black-smoking bitch...Look at her, fouling the air. But she can sail against the wind, damn her, and she means the end of the China clippers, the most beautiful ships ever made, God damn her.

Longstaff is startled.

328 EXT. DECK - BRITISH FRIGATE - DAY ***

where Brock and Gorth are among a group of privileged spectators. The Nemesis can be seen at work from the frigate. Brock leans to Gorth.

BROCK
There be the future, I'm think-ing. Faster than any clipper ever made...I'm going to England. I'm going to order two of them for the House of Brock.

329 THE NEMESIS ***

as she fires a powerful broadside.

330 EXT. FORT - DAY ***

A white flag of surrender flutters up on a pole.

331 EXT. BOGUE - DAY - FULL SHOT ***

as in Sc. 326. A great cheer goes up from the British ships, as the guns gradually go silent.

332 EXT. DECK - THE NEMESIS - DAY

Dirk is reacting to the cheers of the sailors, then notices that Longstaff is unaccountably thoughtful, not celebrating.

DIRK
William, why aren't you cheering? You've won. You've personally punished the Emperor of China....

LONGSTAFF
Yes, we've taught that Manchu mon-key a lesson, haven't we?

But, for the moment, his heart is not in it, and Dirk, who understands him, is aware of it.

DIRK
What is it, Willie?

(CONTINUED)

332 CONTINUED:

LONGSTAFF
Oh, why can't things ever be all good? Why must there always be a worm in the juiciest of apples?

DIRK
(patiently)
What's the worm, Willie?

LONGSTAFF
Didn't quite know how to tell you, Tai-Pan, but I suppose I must, now. There's been a question raised in Parliament, about the Colony, and the Admiral and all his Captains here are going to be a Commission of Inquiry....

DIRK
And what are they going to inquire into?

LONGSTAFF
The harbor at Hong Kong, and compare it to other facilities we can demand, and get, now that we've brought these buggers to their knees. If they find better, England may just toss Hong Kong back into the pond...Damn it! If you were in Parliament, you could have stopped it, I'm positive, but you're not. Dirk, what do I do now?

Dirk is bleakly aware of the gravity of the situation.

DIRK
(wryly)
Sell more land...Build a race track...

Longstaff gapes at him.

333 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY ***

Flying Cloud is entering the harbor, which seems curiously empty, almost deserted. There are no other clippers, except for the permanently moored Resting Cloud, lorchas or trading ships, and even the sampans and junks moored below the Chinese village seem fewer in number.

334 TOPSAIL AND FLAGS - RESTING CLOUD - DAY

as through a telescope. Signal flags flutter in the slight breeze.

335 EXT. BRIDGE - FLYING CLOUD - DAY

where Dirk, standing beside Orlov, is looking through the telescope. He lowers it now, grim-faced.

DIRK
(bleakly)
Plague. Malaria....

336 INT. ANTEROOM TO ROBB AND SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sarah sits by the window, fanning herself listlessly as Dirk hurries in. Unlike her usually immaculate self, her hair is disheveled, her dress wrinkled, her face greasy with sweat. She has aged. She looks abstracted, remote.

DIRK
(startled)
Sarah -- ! Are you well?

She nods, nods again, fanning herself mechanically.

SARAH
Well enough. Well enough to travel.

DIRK
Travel?...Where's Robb?

SARAH
In bed.

He hurries to and into the bedroom.

337 INT. ROBB AND SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

as Dirk comes in and sees Robb in the bed, asleep. He goes to him. Robb's face is gaunt and grey, his eyes shut, his mouth slightly open to reveal his teeth.

DIRK
Robb -- ?

(CONTINUED)

337 CONTINUED:

He reaches out, touches Robb's face, and realizes he is dead. He is hit hard.

DIRK
Oh, my God....

Then, controlling himself, he covers Robb's face with the bedsheet, and goes out, closing the door behind him.

338 INT. ANTEROOM - DAY

Sarah has not moved, except to fan herself.

DIRK
I'm sorry, Sarah. He's dead.

SARAH
Yes, I know. He died an hour ago. Or yesterday. I don't remember. Anyway, I can go home now, can't I?

DIRK
(gently)
You can do whatever you want. But don't go now. Rest a while. This is typhoon season. It's a bad time to sail home. Wait till fall. You'll be stronger then.

SARAH
Oh, no. I've waited long enough. Too long...So did Robb. You know, he never wanted to be Tai-Pan. It was what you wanted. Always you. What you wanted. Always you and The Noble House, and this filthy island. You used Robb up, and now he's dead and good for nothing, but the worms. You use up everyone, don't you? But he's no use to The Noble House now, is he? And no use to me, either...I'm going home, Tai-Pan, but what's the good of that now? It's too late. Look at me -- I'm used up, too....

Dirk doesn't know what to say. There is a knock on the door, which Sarah doesn't seem to hear.

(CONTINUED)

338 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Come in ---

Gordon Chen comes in, and takes in the scene swiftly.

GORDON
I'm sorry, Tai-Pan. I came several times, but Mrs. Struan would not let me in....

They are both aware of Sarah's averted profile, stiff with disapproval and disgust.

GORDON
All the traders and their families have gone to Macao. Cullum was already there, and I took the liberty of advising him to remain until the sickness was over.

DIRK
And my lady?

Sarah snorts, and gives a short burst of shrill laughter.

GORDON
When I saw her last, she was well, thank God. And your respected brother, sir?

DIRK
(deliberately)
Your uncle is dead. Please ask Captain Orlov to do what's necessary, and then take Mrs. Struan to Macao and arrange for her to return to London...And tell Cullum to stay away until I send for him...

339 INT. HONG KONG HOUSE - DAY

Dirk goes through the empty sitting room. There is no sign of May-May. Despite Gordon's reassurance, he is worred by the silence.

DIRK
May-May -- !

The house remains silent. Increasingly disturbed, he goes to:

340 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

as Dirk comes in. The bed is made and empty, and the room seems almost too neat and tidy. He goes sick with fear. And then, through the windows, he sees May-May coming toward the house from the garden with cut flowers in her arms, and his heart leaps with relief and joy.

341 EXT. HONG KONG HOUSE GARDEN - DAY

Dirk has May-May in his arms and is kissing her. When he lets her go:

MAY-MAY
(breathless)
God's blood, Tai-Pan, you've crushed my flowers, never mind.

DIRK
Where are the servants?

MAY-MAY
When I saw your cutter coming ashore, I sent them out for food. What's the matter, you think they run away because of the sickness?

DIRK
I thought they might have.

MAY-MAY
Not my servants.
(pleased)
You were afraid for me, hey?

DIRK
Yes.

He kisses her again, long and hard.

MAY-MAY
(happy)
So. You missed me fantastical, hey?

DIRK
I missed you fantastical....

He carries her to the house.

342 INT. BEDROOM - HONG KONG HOUSE - DUSK

Dirk and May-May are in the mosquito-netted bed, naked under the sheet in the cool of the twilight, after making love. Dirk is withdrawn, troubled. May-May watches him. He moves, turns and sees her. They look at each other in silence for a moment.

DIRK
I don't understand myself, I found my brother dead only an hour ago. And then I come here and make love to you....

MAY-MAY
You prove that you are alive. That's not a sin.

He finds it possible to believe, but he is still deeply unhappy with himself.

DIRK
There are many kinds of sins. Am I responsible for Robb's death?

MAY-MAY
No! It was his joss.

DIRK
I think I am. His wife thinks so, too.

MAY-MAY
No! I don't say this only because I love you, but because it is true. It was his destination. I mean, his destiny. The gods had need of him. It was his joss, never mind.

DIRK
What's mine then?

MAY-MAY
I hope we are together when you find out....

DIRK
(his thoughts reverting to Robb)
I shall miss him. I miss him now...

(CONTINUED)

342 CONTINUED:

MAY-MAY
Of course, but to grieve will not bring him back. Even if your grief did bring him back, that would be bad joss. I tell you, we will give your brother a funeral that will be remembered for years. We will mourn for a hundred days. We will spare no expense. Your Chinese son will arrange for fifty professional mourners, no, a hundred, why not, with drums and rattles and banners.

DIRK
Are you mad? We don't have professional mourners.

MAY-MAY
Then how do you show your love for your brother? Of course there must be mourners! Are we not The Noble House? Are we to lose face before the meanest coolie? Apart from face, that would be bad joss, Tai-Pan!....

DIRK
We don't do it that way, you heathen.

MAY-MAY
(cheerfully)
My whole point. You take care of face with the barbarians, and I will do the same with the real people of Hong Kong. My people. I will wear white for one hundred days. I will have a tablet made, and we will kowtow to it every night. At the end of the hundred days, we will burn the tablet, as always, and his soul will be reborn safely, as always.

May-May's woman servant comes into the room, carrying a silver bowl on a tray. She brings it to the bed, sets it down on the floor, bows, and goes out.

DIRK
Do you think you might teach your servants to knock before coming into my bedroom?

(CONTINUED)

342 CONTINUED: (2)

MAY-MAY
What for? They know everything you got.

DIRK
Naturally. That's because they never knock.

He sits up, opens the mosquito netting, lifts the top of the silver bowl. There are small hot wet cloths in it, and Dirk takes one for May-May, and another for himself.

MAY-MAY
Never mind. I must tell you something, more important, I don't like the feng shui of this house. I can feel it.

DIRK
You were going to have a feng shui gentleman come out to look at it.

MAY-MAY
Yes. But he ran away because of the sickness, damn fool.

A mosquito comes to rest on Dirk's leg, and feeds on him. He slaps and kills it, but too late. He wipes the spot of blood away with the damp cloth.

343 EXT. WHARF - HONG KONG - DAY

Dirk and Sarah, both dressed in black, follow Robb's coffin, carried by six sailors from Flying Cloud, aboard the clipper. Orlov stands on the bridge, watching them come, head bare.

The camera rises higher and higher, leaving the wharf and moving toward the Chinese village. As it descends, the sounds of Robb's Chinese funeral become louder and louder, until they are deafening. And then it can be seen: through the narrow streets and alleys, an uninhibited white-clothed Chinese funeral procession weaves its way and cries to the gods about the great loss to The Noble House, with shrieking and moaning and groaning and tearing of clothing and banging of drums.

Gordon Chen follows the cortege, very solemn as he tears his garments and cries aloud, but very dignified at the same time, and very important. The spectators look at him with great respect. The drums bang away.

344 INT. A ROOM IN GORDON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A crowded room, part sitting room and part office. Gordon is sitting at a desk, going over his accounts. His concubine, a plump, good-natured looking girl, Ah Sam, is making tea. They speak to each other in Chinese, sub-titled. Gordon closes the books, pleased with himself.

GORDON
I have done well. My noble father will be very pleased with his profit.

He rises and gathers his ledgers and accounts.

AH SAM
Will you stop working then, and refresh yourself?

GORDON
In a moment. Help me.

He goes to the center of the room, lifts a mat, and discloses a trap door. With his arms full, Ah Sam's help is necessary to lift the trap door, and she is obedient and quick. Gordon goes down the trap door steps.

345 INT. GORDON'S CELLAR - NIGHT

Gordon can be seen in the shaft of light from the room above as he comes down into the rock-walled cellar. He lights a lantern, and Ah Sam closes the trap door. Gordon lights another lantern and in the increased light it is now possible to see that this is Gordon's real office, as well as his bank, and where he keeps his most precious possessions, his ledgers, files, his money, chests of bullion, bolts of silk, and other objects of high value. He is putting away the ledgers he has brought down with him, when he becomes aware that he is not alone. Shocked and afraid, he turns to see two roughly-dressed and very capable looking Chinese standing against the wall, and then is even more startled to recognize Fong.

GORDON
(in Chinese, titled)
Fong! You have come to rob me?... then take what you want, but do no harm!

FONG
(in Chinese, titled)
We have not come to rob you. Indeed, we bring you great honor.

(CONTINUED)

345 CONTINUED:

Gordon is bewildered. The Second Chinese brings out a small red triangular banner, with two Chinese characters on it.

SECOND CHINESE
You are aware of the meaning of this sign?

GORDON
Yes. It is the sign of the Hung Mun Society.

SECOND CHINESE
You are aware that we are a hundred thousand strong, and that we are sworn, first, to destroy the Manchu tyrants, and then, if it takes five hundred years, to drive out all foreign invaders?

GORDON
So I have heard.

SECOND CHINESE
We have come to establish a lodge on this island. You have been chosen to become one of us.

Gordon, taken aback, looks at Fong, realizing at the same time the extent of Fong's secret life.

SECOND CHINESE
When you have become a blood-brother, you will then be taught what is necessary for you to be our Tai-Pan for Hong Kong. Do you understand what is happening to you on this day?

Gordon catches his breath sharply, and licks his suddenly dry lips.

GORDON
As you have said, you bring me great honor....

346 INT. BEDROOM - HONG KONG HOUSE - NIGHT

Dirk is in bed, dripping with fever sweat. He has malaria. May-May dries his face gently. A Chinese Doctor studies

(CONTINUED)

346 CONTINUED:

him. The Doctor is an elderly man, with a long and well-oiled queue, ancient black robes, long hairs growing from a wart on his cheek, but his eyes are alert and clear.

Now Dirk is attacked by a severe chill. He trembles, his teeth chatter.

May-May covers him as best she can, and turns to the Doctor. They speak in Chinese, with subtitles.

DOCTOR
It is, of course, the poison of the bad air. He is a strong man, and he may recover. But there is no more of the medicine on the island.

MAY-MAY
What medicine?

DOCTOR
The barbarians call it cinchona. It comes from the bark of a certain rare tree, which grows in a far country. I had some, but is long since gone. There is none here, none in Macao, none in Canton....

Dirk stops shivering, and now relapses into fever again. May-May drops to her knees and wipes his dripping face again.

MAY-MAY
Go to the house of my master's son. Tell him he must get this medicine, at any cost.

347 EXT. ENGLISH CLUB - MACAO - NIGHT

Cullum, Gorth and their group of young bloods approach and go into the club.

GORTH
Admitted, it took a godrotting plague to do it, but Hong Kong's finished for good and all, and not even your father can do one buggering thing about it.

Cullum keeps his peace, and shrugs.

348 INT. FOYER - ENGLISH CLUB - MACAO - NIGHT

as the group come in, and move toward the billiard room.

GORTH
How's he, by the way? Hasn't caught it, has he?

CULLUM
No, not that I've heard. Anyway, the plague hasn't been invented that could kill my father.

He gets his laugh. They go on, passing the open double-doorway to the dining room, well-filled with traders and other Europeans. The camera holds, to show Mary and Horatio and Shevaun and Jeff Cooper at separate tables.

349 SHEVAUN AND COOPER

Jeff serious, Shevaun uncomfortable.

SHEVAUN
But why must you have an answer now?

COOPER
The sickness on the island, Shevaun. It's made me realize how little we control our fate. The Chinese are right when they talk about joss...I thought we had all the time in the world. I see now that life is meant to be lived as if every day might be our last.

SHEVAUN
But you said -- oh, give me another month, Jeff, please! I'll tell you yes, or no -- in a month. I promise! Please -- ?

She dazzles him with her eyes and smile.

350 MARY AND HORATIO

Horatio is pouring wine for himself and Mary. They are silent, at a loss for things to say to each other. They sip their wine. Horatio finds a topic.

(CONTINUED)

350 CONTINUED:

HORATIO
Oh -- this will amuse you. Glessing spoke to me again, about you. He wants to -- how did he put it -- pay his respects.

MARY
Does he?

HORATIO
Yes. I told him, as gently as I could, that you didn't consider him a possible suitor.

Mary puts her glass down, her eyes glinting.

MARY
(quiet steel in her voice)
Why did you do that, Horatio?

HORATIO
Because it's true. I mean, he's not a bad chap, but he's not right for us, is he?

MARY
For us?...Horatio, we're no longer children. There's no going back, ever.

Horatio becomes hideously nervous, scarlet.

HORATIO
Of course not! I understand. You know how deeply ashamed I've been, always. It's like a bad dream! Let's not even talk about it -- !

MARY
No, let's. Because it wasn't a dream. But it is over. And if you think that -- because it did happen -- we're bound to each other, that we're married in the eyes of God -- or the devil -- that we'll live together doing penance for the rest of our lives,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

350 CONTINUED: (2)

MARY (Cont'd)
a loving brother and sister in public, and a pining monk and a hungry nun at home, you're god-damned crazy, Horatio. You're sick in the mind....

Deliberately, she knocks over her wine glass, spilling her wine into his lap.

MARY
Oh, goodness -- how clumsy -- I am sorry -- !

Horatio rises, and hurries out of the room, while Mary signals for a waiter, in appealingly helpless distress.

Horatio, going out of the dining room, almost collides with Glessing, coming in, nods abruptly, and hurries by. Glessing is puzzled, then sees Mary across the floor, just as she sees him. Smiling sweetly, she waves for him to join her.

351 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY ***

Quiet, all but empty. A single bedraggled sampan moves toward the shore.

352 THE SAMPAN - CLOSER

Fong, travel-stained, and weary, is at the tiller.

353 EXT. A STREET IN THE CHINESE VILLAGE - DAY

with very few people in view, and those moving about slowly, almost aimlessly. In contrast, Fong hurries urgently up the street. He passes four men carrying a wide litter. Corpses are piled on it.

354 EXT. A HILLSIDE - DAY

where houses stand, uncompleted, the naked wood showing the effects of sun and weather. There are no coolies or workmen in view, no one except Gordon and Fong as they hurry up the hill.

355 EXT. KNOLL - DAY

The unfinished church stands desolate on the deserted knoll. A family of squirrels plays in the empty shell. Down below, the small figures of Gordon and Fong can be seen hastening to Dirk's house.

356 INT. SITTING ROOM - HONG KONG HOUSE - DAY

Gordon gives a tiny leather pouch to the Chinese Doctor, who opens it, takes out a pinch of dark powder, tastes it on the tip of his tongue. He nods, satisfied and impressed. Gordon relaxes, and Fong's face splits into a pleased grin. He and Gordon bow to each other. The Doctor goes out to the bedroom, and May-May, who shows the effects of long strain, reaches out to Gordon and Fong and touches them both gratefully.

357 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Dirk, racked by the sickness, gray and emaciated, is being supported by the Doctor, as May-May makes him drink from a teacup. When it is empty, they allow him to lie back. His eyes close, and they move away from the bed.

MAY-MAY
(in Chinese, titled)
Will my lord live now, Doctor?

DOCTOR
If it is not too late.

MAY-MAY
What more can I do?

DOCTOR
Pray.

He bows, and goes out. May-May comes back to Dirk, and sinks to her knees beside the bed. She takes his hand, and puts it to her cheek, looking at his worn face.

Dirk opens his eyes, looks at her, and then closes them again wearily.

MAY-MAY
The doctor says I should pray for you, my lover. But how can I pray with a hidden heart? So I must tell you everything now...First, I am the granddaughter of Jin-Qua...

(CONTINUED)

357 CONTINUED:

Dirk's eyes open and he looks at her in utter surprise.

MAY-MAY
Why did my grandfather sell me to you? I will tell you....

358 FLASHBACK - INT. JIN-QUA'S RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Jin-Qua is in his great chair, May-May's Father standing beside him. May-May's Mother, a young and beautiful woman, is half-carried in on her bound feet, and taken to a stool, while a serving woman brings in the infant May-May. Other wives, their feet also bound, and members of the family look on.

MAY-MAY'S VOICE
When I came to earth, my mother, who never walked without help in all her life, refused to let them bind my feet, like other high-born girl children. Oh, my father and Jin-Qua were very angry....

The argument begins and continues. May-May's father and Jin-Qua harangue her Mother, who, although frightened by her own temerity, refuses to give in. The other women, wives and concubines, listen with great excitement behind their trained and impassive faces.

MAY-MAY'S VOICE
They said if my feet were not bound, no wealthy man would ever marry me, or even take me for a concubine. I would be no better than a coolie girl, or a common slave, and that one day they would sell me as one. My mother said a day would come when no women would allow their feet to be bound, and it was better to be a whole coolie than a cripple living in pain all my days...That is why I have such terrible ugly big feet, and not like a lady, never mind....

The argument is over. May-May's mother and father and all the women of Jin-Qua's establishment, carried or hobbling on their small, bound, malformed feet, go. May-May's nurse starts to take her out, but Jin-Qua tells her to leave the infant behind. Alone, Jin-Qua bleakly studies the baby in her carrying basket.

359 INT. A ROOM IN JIN-QUA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

where, through a two-way mirror, May-May, grown, and other women and girls of the house, can see Jin-Qua and Dirk in Jin-Qua's reception room, bargaining for her.

MAY-MAY'S VOICE
And then, when I was ready, he sold me to you. Oh, there was bargaining, but we all knew that I was really a gift, from my grandfather to you, because of your business together, and a fan-quai, a devil barbarian, would not mind terrible ugly big feet. But I was frightened. I did not know how to please such a giant barbarian. But one of the concubines said all men are the same....

End of flashback.

360 DIRK AND MAY-MAY - RESUME SC. 357

MAY-MAY
Only you are not like other men, my lord and my lover...And I have never spied for Jin-Qua. He told me only to learn from you, and to teach you our ways...And I have spoke to him of your affairs only once, and that was in the bad time, when your money was lost....

She reaches under her tunic and brings out a pendant on a gold chain, opens the pendant, and shows Dirk one of the four half-coins of Jin-Qua. Dirk stares at it.

MAY-MAY
In all my life, he has given me only this. He said that one day you and I might have children together, and that this would bring my children and myself great joss when we might need it...I have often prayed that one day you might make me your tai-tai, your Supreme Lady, even though I know it is not possible. But if you will live, I will stop praying for that, and I will give this to the gods....

(CONTINUED)

360 CONTINUED:

Dirk looks at the coin and then at the pinched, intense, pleading face for a long moment. Then his eyes close tiredly.

361 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY ***

Junks and sampans are back in large numbers before the Chinese village. More are sailing in.

362 EXT. CHINESE VILLAGE STREET - DAY

Full, busy, alive again.

363 EXT. GARDEN - HONG KONG HOUSE - DAY

Shooting past May-May, standing on the verandah, as she looks out into the garden, where Dirk, still pale and thin, sits in the warm sunshine. Her heart is full.

364 INT. DINING ROOM - ENGLISH CLUB - NIGHT

Cullum, Gorth and three others are at a table. They have all had a lot to drink, but Cullum seems drunker than the others. He lets his glass of wine be filled, tries to drink it, drops the glass, looks at it stupidly, and then slumps back in his chair dizzily.

People at adjoining tables are looking at them.

Gorth plays the good samaritan.

GORTH
I'll get him home. Meet you in the billiards in half an hour.
(he shakes Cullum, and brings him to)
Come on, young Struan. Uncle Gorth will put you beddybys....

They are all amused, as Gorth lifts Cullum to his feet, and helps him out of the dining room.

365 EXT. MEAN CHINESE ALLEY - NIGHT

Two sedan chairs, with their bearers, stand before a low-

(CONTINUED)

365 CONTINUED:

class brothel. The bearers look on indifferently as Gorth pulls Cullum, who has passed out, out of his sedan chair, and half-carries him to the brothel door. He bangs on it, it opens, and the old Chinese Madam opens it. Gorth pushes past her with Cullum.

366 INT. CHINESE BROTHEL - NIGHT

Chinese whores of various ages and conditions look on as the Madam leads Gorth and Cullum to a small sordid room. Through the open doorway, a filthy pallet can be seen, and beside it a Whore of indeterminate age and doubtful health. Her grin is toothless and ghastly as Gorth dumps Cullum down on the pallet, looks down at him with contempt, and then turns to her.

GORTH
Take care of him, you filthy old scum-bag. Show him all your tricks, old poxhead.

He goes out, content, shutting the door behind him.

367 EXT. CHINESE ALLEY - DAWN

Cullum, unconscious, filthy, barefoot, wearing only his shirt and trousers, lies in the gutter. Most of the Chinese passersby go on after a brief glance. A few, mostly children, look down curiously at the disgusting fan-quai. A well-built Chinese comes by, pauses for a brief look at Cullum, and stops. Closer, he is the man who, with Fong, inducted Gordon into the Hung Mun Tong.

368 EXT. BRIDGE - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

Dirk, still thin and showing the effects of the malaria, is on the bridge near Orlov, worried. On the deck below, the old Chinese Doctor stands windblown at the rail, enjoying the trip.

369 INT. CULLUM'S BEDROOM - MACAO - DAY

Cullum is in bed, staring at the ceiling, scared. Dirk and the Chinese Doctor come in, both in good spirits.

(CONTINUED)

369 CONTINUED:

DIRK
Morning, Cullum! Be happy -- it's the fifteenth day, and you're clean. There's not a sign of anything.

CULLUM
You really mean it -- ? I'm not poxed?

DIRK
The Doctor says you're not, and he'd know.

He looks at the Doctor, who has followed the meaning of the conversation, and nods energetically at Cullum. Cullum lies back in almost faint relief.

CULLUM
Jesus...I'd thought I'd have to kill myself...
(he pulls himself together, and sits up)
I know you can't understand me, Doctor, but I'm the most grateful man you'll ever see.

The Doctor understands him, smiles, bows, and goes out. Cullum and Dirk look at each other.

CULLUM
And thank you, too, Tai-Pan. It's a miracle, your coming here, the way you did, and looking after me. I still don't understand how Gordon learned about me....

DIRK
(gently)
Nor do I understand how you came to do such a stupid thing.

CULLUM
I don't know! I swear to God, I don't know. All I remember is having dinner at the club, and getting drunk -- oh, my God, so god-rotting drunk. And there was talk about women, but I never agreed -- to anything. And then I remember lying in the gutter. That's all.

(CONTINUED)

369 CONTINUED: (2)

DIRK
Who were you getting drunk with?

CULLUM
Henry, Lang, Sid Elliot -- and Gorth. Just the five of us...
(he is filled with relief again)
Oh, thank God, I thought I'd never be able to see Tess again, never be able to marry her.

DIRK
Have you set a date?

CULLUM
No. He says not until she's of age. It's going to be hell....
(embarrassed, he comes out with it)
I dream and soil my bed almost every night....

Dirk nods understandingly, and Cullum is grateful to him.

DIRK
Have you ever thought of eloping?
(as Cullum stares at him)
Would Tess run away with you?

Cullum thinks about it.

CULLUM
I don't know. She's afraid of him...No, I don't think we could do that.

Dirk shrugs it off.

DIRK
Well, now we know you're healthy, get your unpoxed arse out of that bed and go aboard Thunder Cloud. I've work for you in Hong Kong.

He starts out. Cullum has been thinking.

CULLUM
Tai-Pan ---

(CONTINUED)

369 CONTINUED: (3)

Dirk turns to him. Cullum hesitates, then speaks his mind.

CULLUM
I have to tell you this. When I marry Tess, I'm leaving China. I don't want to live here anymore.

Dirk studies him curiously.

DIRK
You took an oath. You and Robb, remember?

CULLUM
Robb was alive then. It's not the same...And you know, Robb died for nothing. He never wanted to be Tai-Pan. Nor do I. And I know now I've got only one life, and I want to live it my way. I'm sorry.

DIRK
(quietly)
That's all right. You must live that one life. You're free, Cullum.

CULLUM
You really mean that?
(Dirk nods)
And the hell with The Noble House?

DIRK
(drily)
I didn't say that, lad. I'll look after The Noble House....

He goes out. Cullum looks after him, puzzled, relieved, excited.

370 INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - THUNDER CLOUD - DAY

Cullum is facing Orlov, and holding Tess by the hand. She is frightened, excited, happy.

CULLUM
(hard)
I tell you once again, Captain, you'll do as I say, or, by God,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

370 CONTINUED:

CULLUM (Cont'd)
you'll never set foot on another Noble House ship again. You'll be on the beach the moment we get to Hong Kong -- !

Tess is awed by his show of ruthless strength.

ORLOV
You'd do that to me, after all my years with the Noble House?

CULLUM
Yes, God damn it, unless you take my orders.

ORLOV
(straight-faced)
Then I have no choice, sir. I just ask you to give the facts to your father -- and to the young lady's....

He goes to the door and calls out to the bridge:

ORLOV
Cudahy, I'll want you and one other to act as witnesses to a wedding...
(to Tess and Cullum)
If you'll just step over here, please....

Hand in hand, Tess and Cullum, thrilled and trembling, move toward Orlov's table. As Cudahy and a Seaman come in and remove their caps, Orlov finds his book of ceremonies, turns to the proper page, and begins to read:

ORLOV
By the powers vested in me as the Master of this vessel, I am about to join this man and this woman in holy matrimony....

Cullum and Tess are lost in each other's eyes.

371 INT. DINING ROOM - ENGLISH CLUB - NIGHT

Dirk comes into the well-filled room, and is greeted effusively by the Portugese Maitre de Hotel.

(CONTINUED)

371 CONTINUED:

MAITRE DE
Tai-Pan, welcome -- ! How wonderful to see you! We heard ---

DIRK
I know. Yes, I'm fully recovered.

MAITRE DE
(searching the room)
Are you alone? I'll have a table for you in a moment -- and please let me open a bottle of our finest champagne -- ?

Across the room, a table is occupied by Shevaun, Cooper, Tillman, Mary and Glessing, with one vacant chair. They have already seen Dirk, and Cooper is on his feet, waving to him. Dirk sees them.

DIRK
I'll dine with my friends, thank you.

MAITRE DE
Allow me ---

Dirk lets himself be guided across the floor to the table, where Tillman and Glessing have joined Cooper on their feet.

Mary watches him come, her eyes gleaming with anticipation.

Shevaun's color is bright, her heart beating.

Cooper and Tillman move to grip his hand; Glessing is more formal.

At other tables, diners are aware of Dirk.

TILLMAN
Well, now, this is a sight! We heard you were deathly sick, Tai-Pan. Very glad to see you, indeed!

COOPER
(genuinely)
Welcome home, Tai-Pan -- !

DIRK
Thanks, but Hong Kong is home.

(CONTINUED)

371 CONTINUED: (2)

GLESSING
What, that breeding place for malaria?

DIRK
Not if we use good sense -- it'll never happen again. No, it's time for you all to come home.

COOPER
This is even more of a celebration than we knew! Tai-Pan, Mary and Glessing, here, are going to be married. Horatio's turned up sick, so please take his chair, and join us ---

Stunned, Dirk turns to Mary, who meets his look calmly.

MARY
(demurely)
I suppose I should have asked for your approval, Tai-Pan, but there wasn't time, truly.

DIRK
(evenly)
I wish you both great happiness... Captain Glessing and I haven't always agreed, but I respect and admire him. And I wish him well.

GLESSING
(touched)
Thank you, that's very good of you.

MARY
And I thank you, too, Tai-Pan....

Her manner remains demure, but the glint in her eyes may be either candlelight or mockery.

COOPER
It's in the air, Tai-Pan! I've asked Shevaun to marry me, and I'm hoping she'll let us announce it tonight.

Now Dirk turns to Shevaun. Shevaun is smiling, but she is looking at him with a challenge that soon becomes a silent plea, almost a demand. There is a beat of silence. Both

(CONTINUED)

371 CONTINUED: (3)

Cooper and Tillman are keenly aware of the unspoken question that has been raised. Dirk breaks the silence.

DIRK
I hope so, too. You're perfect for each other.

Shevaun's smile becomes somewhat stiff. Tillman relaxes.

COOPER
(relieved and grateful)
That's what I keep telling her -- !

DIRK
(deliberately)
Jeff, this is a special night, because I'm to be married, too.... A young lady none of you have ever met, Miss T'Chung May-May, the granddaughter of Jin-Qua, of Canton....

There is a moment of shocked silence. The men are embarrassed, Shevaun goes white, even Mary is startled, and then allows a sardonic gleam to sparkle in her eyes.

Then the silence is broken by a hoarse shout from the entrance to the dining room. It comes from Gorth, who is carrying a cat-o'-nine-tails, wild with rage.

GORTH
There you are, you son of a bitch!

The whole room goes quiet.

Dirk turns and sees Gorth, without surprise.

The shocked Maitre De Hotel moves to bar Gorth from the room, and is shoved aside.

Dirk waits for him, as Gorth strides directly to the table.

GORTH
Where's Tess, you son of a bitch?

DIRK
(quietly)
You've called me that twice too often. If you do it again, I'll kill you...And I don't know where your sister is.

(CONTINUED)

371 CONTINUED: (4)

GORTH
You lie! She's run away with your pox-ridden son!

DIRK
I knew it was you -- !

He draws his knife, and Gorth raises his whip. Women scream. Men surround them and pull them apart. In the melee, a candelabrum on one of the tables is knocked over; the table linen catches fire, and waiters hurry to put out the flames.

TILLMAN
Gentlemen, please, you can't do this here -- !

Gorth is filled with wild and violent exultation now.

GORTH
I don't care where it is! Choose your place, and choose your weapons, you son of a bitch....

TILLMAN
Both of you know dueling is against the law in Macao!

DIRK
We'll find a place. And I choose fighting-irons.

Tillman, Cooper and even Glessing are aghast.

COOPER
No, Dirk! You're just out of a sick bed ---

GLESSING
Right. Be sensible, man! Make it pistols!

DIRK
I really prefer fighting irons.

Gorth grins happily.

GORTH
Thank you! Oh, thank you kindly, Tai-Pan. Fighting irons, it is....

372 CLOSEUP - THE BARBED BALL OF A FIGHTING IRON - DAY

as it crashes into a section of ship's rail, gouging into the seasoned wood as if it were cardboard.

Wider, Gorth has taken a vicious practice swing with his fighting iron.

Dirk and Gorth, stripped to the waist, are on the foredeck of a lorcha, each with fighting irons. The deck has been cleared for them, but on the bridge and other raised sections there is an audience of traders, including Cooper, Tillman, Glessing, Horatio, etc. Dirk is warming up, as well, but not as theatrically as Gorth.

373 EXT. SEA - DAY - MED. FULL SHOT ***

The lorcha is surrounded by a half dozen more lorchas, sampans, and a clipper, the rails and riggings strung with the small figures of onlookers who have come out to see the duel.

374 CLOSER - A MAN

clinging to a mast on one of the lorchas, and, like others, looking through a telescope.

375 HIGH SHOT - THROUGH THE GLASS

down on Dirk and Gorth, on the foredeck of the duelling lorcha. Dirk waits, while Gorth continues to swing his weapon in preparation. Dirk is thin, but still superbly muscled; Gorth is bigger, heavier, perhaps stronger, certainly younger and in better physical shape at this time.

376 thru 386 THE FIGHTING-IRON DUEL - (TO BE DESIGNED) - DAY

Dirk watches calmly as Gorth flexes his muscles. Fifteen feet of bare deck separate them.

The spectators above them are tense and breathless, appalled and, at the same time, thrilled.

DIRK
(pointedly)
When do you think you'll be ready?

Gorth stops, and looks at him, supremely aware of his advantage in size, weight, and, perhaps, in strength.

(CONTINUED)

376 thru 386 CONTINUED:

GORTH
I've been waiting for this day, Mr. Struan...Before it's over, you'll be begging me to kill you because by the Lord God, before I'm through with you, from today on, you'll never walk again, you'll never feed yourself again, you'll never see again, you'll never bed your Chinese whore again. Come on, Mr. Struan, who used to be Tai-Pan....

Dirk nods calmly, and raises his fighting-iron. Gorth raises his. They move closer to each other, their brutal, deadly weapons poised.

The spectators above them are breathless.

The duel begins, a savage struggle that calls for both strength and agility, quickness and power. Again and again the cruel, deadly, barbed iron balls swing a hair's breath away from skin and bone, and when they crash into deck or rail or mast they leave jagged, splintered holes that show quite clearly what damage they will do to human flesh.

For a time there seems no doubt that Gorth's bull-like strength and amazing speed will bring Dirk down into the crushed, bleeding and crippled hulk Gorth has sentenced him to become. But Dirk plays toreador to Gorth's bull, with magnificent footwork and Chinese-like agility, escaping the barbed ball again and again.

And then, when both their torsos are bleeding from jagged cuts, Dirk tricks Gorth into a wild swing that winds his iron around a mast and makes it useless.

Gorth whirls, pulls a hidden knife, and pounces on Dirk like a panther, bringing the blade up to plunge it into Dirk's belly. Dirk sidesteps and swings his fighting-iron like a baseball bat, and in the last half-second of his life Gorth sees the blood-stained, unavoidable, fatal iron ball zooming directly into his staring eyes and face.

Dirk regains and holds his panting balance.

The spectators are in a trance. Then Horatio vomits.

Dirk breathes deeply. It is over. Only it is not over. For now, in his mind's eye he sees before him a flash of:

(CONTINUED)

376 thru 386 CONTINUED: (2)

BROCK, his face a mask of rage and hatred. That fight to the death is now inevitable and closer.

Then, the harbinger of the future fades out of his vision. Dirk drops his fighting-iron on the stained deck, and walks away from the corpse of Gorth Brock.

387 INT. MRS. FOTHERINGILL'S BROTHEL - NIGHT

On the landing, two of Mrs. Fotheringill's bouncers are battering in the door. They break through and into:

388 INT. BEDROOM - MRS. FOTHERINGILL'S - NIGHT

where Quance, fully dressed and looking like the result of a two-month spree, is sitting up in bed, clutching a painting. Two of Mrs. Fotheringill's young ladies, one dressed as a jockey, the other as a clown, are in bed with him, frightened.

The two bruisers plunge through into the room. One of them grabs Quance, and drags him back through the doorway. The other starts collecting Quance's pictures, some hung on the walls, some stacked against them.

389 INT. LANDING AND STAIRWAY - MRS. FOTHERINGILL'S - NIGHT

The Bouncer throws Quance down the stairs.

Quance lands at the bottom, where Mrs. Fotheringill and her girls, just returned from Macao with their suitcases and trunks, are looking on. The Bouncer who has tossed Quance down the stairs now reaches him and picks him up. Behind him the Second Bouncer comes down with his arms filled with canvasses.

Quance is dazed, but he is aware of the danger to his work.

QUANCE
Mrs. Fotheringill, I beseech you ---

MRS. FOTHERINGILL
And I thought you were a gentleman...Out! Out, you drunken goat -- !

(CONTINUED)

389 CONTINUED:

QUANCE
But my paintings...You can't keep my paintings!

MRS. FOTHERINGILL
Oh, yes, I can, until you pay me four hundred pounds. Four hundred you owe me, for girls and liquor and damages to these premises. Out -- !

She opens the door, and the Bouncer runs him to it, and boots him out into the street.

390 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

as Quance lands in the muddy gutter, Mrs. Fotheringill appears in the doorway.

MRS. FOTHERINGILL
And if you don't pay up, you'd better get off this island, Mr. bloody deadbeat Quance, or I'll have you in prison until you're too old to raise a paintbrush -- never mind anything else ---

Quance sits up, mud-spattered and filthy.

QUANCE
Go hump yourself, you orange-haired harridan.

She slams the door.

391 EXT. WHARF - NIGHT

Quance, alone, quietly climbs aboard a lorcha.

392 INT. HOLD OF LORCHA - NIGHT

Quance settles himself as comfortably as he can in the hold. From an inner pocket, he gets out a flask, and comforts himself with a drink.

393 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY ***

It's as full as it was before, with clippers, lorchas and sampans. More ships are coming in, most prominent the British fleet carrying the Investigating Commission. The day is dark, cloudy, windy, with white-caps on the sea and choppy waves in the harbor.

394 EXT. BRIDGE - SCARLET WITCH - DAY

Brock is on the bridge, his face set, hard, bitter. He knows. He looks through his glass and sees:

395 CLOSE - AS THROUGH BROCK'S TELESCOPE - DAY

the flag of The Noble House, flying proudly. The telescope moves down, finds the bridge of Thunder Cloud, and Cullum and Tess there, excited, their happiness flawed by the apprehension they are both trying to hide.

396 BROCK

overflowing with rage. He lowers the glass, and makes himself a promise.

397 EXT. BRIDGE - THE BRITISH FLAGSHIP - DAY

on Longstaff, Glessing, the Admiral of the fleet, and others of the Investigating Commission, looking out at the harbor curiously, with more than a trace of professional complacence.

Longstaff is very nervous.

398 HIGH SHOT - THE HARBOR - DAY ***

Shooting from the INT. HONG KONG HOUSE past Dirk and May-May at the window, looking down toward the harbor that has come alive again.

MAY-MAY
So. All the chickens come home now.

DIRK
Yes, and Her Majesty's roosters, with their beaks in the air, as if they smell nothing but bad eggs.

(CONTINUED)

398 CONTINUED:

MAY-MAY
And that one-eyed devil, too, that you will have to fight now.

DIRK
Yes.

MAY-MAY
Why must you fight him yourself? Why don't you just have him killed, like any intelligent person would do?

Dirk turns away from the window, and moves her around to face him.

DIRK
I don't know what to do with you. If you have ideas like that, how can you ever be Tai-Tai of The Noble House?

She shakes her head, hurt.

MAY-MAY
Don't tease me. Please do not tease me about such an important thing.

DIRK
I'm not teasing you.

She stares at him.

MAY-MAY
You mean -- really marry? To be your wife according to your customs? And to mine?

DIRK
Yes, both, if you wish.

Her face glows and at the same time her eyes fill with tears. She drops to her knees to kowtow, but Dirk catches her, and raises her up.

DIRK
Don't you kowtow to me, Mrs. Struan.

(CONTINUED)

398 CONTINUED: (2)

MAY-MAY
But I only want to thank you for giving me such fantastical face ---

DIRK
You have always had a fantastical face....

MAY-MAY
Oh, my God, I'm too happy! I shall die ---

She throws her arms around him and hugs him, and he holds her gently.

399 INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

He is at his ledgers when Brock bursts in, strides over to his table, and leans down over him, icy with hatred.

BROCK
Bastard, go find thy father. Tell him he's not finished with fighting-irons, but by God I'm going to finish with him, today....

Gordon recoils from the sheer aura of deadly hatred Brock has brought into the room, but maintains his dignity.

GORDON
Where, sir? And when?

BROCK
Wherever he wants.
(he has another thought)
No, let's get on with it. Tell him I'll be waiting for him up at his knoll, the one he wanted so bad. It be fine and private up there. Tell him to bring his iron, and to come alone, in an hour. Tell him not to worry -- I won't shoot him as he comes. I want to do him, like he did my boy....

400 EXT. GARDEN - HONG KONG HOUSE - DAY

A strong wind is blowing through the garden as May-May and Gordon look up the hill toward the knoll. They see:

401 DIRK - SMALL IN THE DISTANCE

climbing up the windswept path toward the knoll with his fighting-iron. Dark grey clouds lower overhead.

402 MAY-MAY AND GORDON

their hair and clothing tugged by the wind as they watch Dirk go.

GORDON
This morning I had planned to give the Tai-Pan a report on business. We are doing so well in our partnership. It would have pleased him very much.

MAY-MAY
It will please him when he returns.

GORDON
Yes, of course. I will wait with you, noble lady, if you will allow me?

MAY-MAY
No, thank you. I would prefer to be alone. I have things to say to the gods....

Gordon nods.

GORDON
I will pray also. But he will kill Brock, of course.

MAY-MAY
Of course....

They look up the hill again, to see:

403 DIRK

smaller in the distance, as he approaches the high, far knoll.

404 DIRK - CLOSER

climbing up the steep incline toward the knoll, holding his fighting-iron by its shaft.

405 EXT. KNOLL - THE CHURCH - DAY

still unfinished, more weather-beaten than before, no sign of the squirrels or of any other life.

Then, suddenly and startlingly, Brock comes out of the darkness of the shell of the church, his fighting-iron ready. He looks downhill, and sees:

406 DIRK

coming up.

407 DIRK - CLOSER

looks up, and sees:

408 BROCK

waiting for him.

409 EXT. KNOLL ***

as Dirk reaches it and comes toward Brock. He stops, ten paces from him. They look at each other, all the long years of hatred coming to orgasm. The wind pulls at them, but they are unaware of it.

BROCK
Thee planned the elopement, and the fight with Gorth, didn't thee?

DIRK
Yes. He got my son poxed. Now your girl's got it, too.

BROCK
Thee'd do a thing like that?

DIRK
No. But your son did. As it happens, they're clean, but that's not his fault.

(CONTINUED)

409 CONTINUED:

BROCK
You lie!

In his heart, he knows it is true, but the knowledge only makes him hate Dirk more.

DIRK
If that's what you believe, come on, then. Let's finish it, for Christ's sake -- !

Brock raises his fighting-iron, charges at Dirk, and swings it viciously. It misses Dirk by a hair, as he sways back, then sways forward again and hacks at Brock. Brock dodges it, and they begin to circle each other. Dirk feints, Brock backs, then charges again.

At that moment, the first fantastically violent burst of a typhoon sweeps across the knoll, demolishes the church, picks up both Dirk and Brock, and flings them into the trees that border the knoll.

410 EXT. HILLSIDE - LEADING DOWN FROM THE KNOLL - DAY ***

The typhoon wind sweeps down the hillside, snapping trees like firewood in its path, like a giant but invisible bull-dozer. The trees go down with the sound of a great string of fireworks...Then, everything is silent again.

411 EXT. KNOLL - DAY

Where the church was, there is only a small pile of splintered wood. Its cross has been driven into a tree-stump at a crazy angle.

Brock comes into view, getting up dazedly from a clump of trees. He looks around and sees:

Dirk coming up slowly, pulling himself erect on the remains of a sapling, his face pale.

Their eyes meet in the knowledge that they have met a force even greater than their hatred for each other.

BROCK
Typhoon -- !

He turns and runs down the hill.

412 DIRK

he sways dizzily. There is blood on his left trouser leg from the knee down: his leg is broken. He looks at the sky and sees:

413 EXT. SKY - DAY ***

Black clouds ring the island, and the sky is strangely murky. Then it is split by a tremendous flash of lightning.

414 DIRK

holding on to the stump of sapling. There is a great roll of thunder.

415 EXT. SKY - DAY ***

The black clouds come closer, grow larger. Everything goes dark. Rain comes down in torrents.

416 DIRK

punished by the almost horizontal sweep of pounding rain.

417 EXT. HARBOR - DAY - FULL SHOT ***

Wind, waves and rain sweep across the harbor and the anchored ships.

418 INT. SITTING ROOM - HONG KONG HOUSE - DAY ***

May-May, alone, is playing backgammon against herself. Rain drums on the roof. A gust of wind smashes a window, and rain pours in, but she plays on determinedly. Then suddenly the sound of the rain is gone. She becomes aware of the silence, and also that the light is growing stronger. She rises from the table and goes to the window, the camera going with her. The black clouds are still circling the horizon, but the sky is brighter.

There is a pounding on the door. Startled, she hesitates, then goes to the door and opens it. Dirk is in the doorway, supporting his broken leg with a two-by-four from the demolished church. Exhausted, he sways, and she supports him, as he comes into the room. Dirk gets his bearings.

(CONTINUED)

418 CONTINUED:

MAY-MAY
Brock did this?

DIRK
No, the wind...You're alone. Where are the servants?

MAY-MAY
They were frightened. Fantastical wind, hey? I told them go down into Chinatown.

DIRK
You waited here alone for me?

MAY-MAY
Naturally.

They become aware of a constantly louder sound, first a sighing, then a groaning, then a growling, and finally a roaring of wind, closer and closer, until it is upon them.

Through the window, they can see a black cloud of a wind sweeping past the trembling house.

May-May helps Dirk to the window, and, looking out, they see the black wind cloud blowing down the hill. As before, it sweeps away everything in its path.

419 thru 430 THE TYPHOON SEQUENCE ***

Buildings, trees, anything standing, is caught up and destroyed by the typhoon. And, while it rages:

Gordon is in his room, burning a paper and praying when the wind blows out his windows and throws him against the wall.

Running sedan chair coolies and their sedan chairs are blown out of the street.

The hovels of the Chinese town are demolished. Bodies fly through the air, and disappear. The narrow alleys become vacant lots.

Out of town, trees are uprooted and fly through the air.

The trees come into the European town, smashing walls and bringing down buildings.

(CONTINUED)

419 thru 430 CONTINUED:

All the windows are blown out of the Residence House.

A pub is snuffed out, as bottles disintegrate and the customers are blown out into the street and oblivion.

Mrs. Fotheringill's roof and walls go, revealing customers in bed with her girls, while Mrs. Fotheringill finds herself exposed to all on her water closet.

A schoolroom, its small chairs and desks fortunately empty, disintegrates and disappears.

In his underground shelter now, Gordon and his concubine are safe and comfortable.

But in a Chinese shack above ground, the shack and an entire family, including children and an infant in a crib are blown away.

In a corner of the sitting room, Dirk is cradling May-May in his arms.

In the harbor, great waves are battering the ships. But the English ships seem to be maintaining their moorings, while:

The Chinese sampans take the greatest punishment, their flimsy anchor ropes and chains giving way in the wind. Sampans fly through the air like planes, and crash on the beach.

431 INT. ADMIRAL'S CABIN - DAY - TYPHOON

The Admiral, Longstaff and Horatio are tossed about from table to chairs. Decanters fly through the air.

432 INT. HOLD OF LORCHA - TYPHOON - QUANCE

is like a popcorn kernel in a hot pan. He tries to hold on to something, anything.

QUANCE
(drunk and dazed)
Worst crossing I've ever made....

433 EXT. HARBOR - TYPHOON - FULL SHOT ***

The typhoon is growing in intensity. Waves tower to the height of the anchored but storm-tossed ships. Some hawsers give way, and their ships yaw wildly.

434 A FRIGATE - TYPHOON ***

A halyard parts, and then another, and the mainmast sheers off just above the deck and crashes into the mizzen. Masts and spars and rigging pound onto the deck, crush the quarterdeck gangway, and the frigate heels wildly.

435 CLOSER - DECK OF FRIGATE - TYPHOON ***

as the disciplined sailors use axes and hatchets against the broken masts to free them and cut them adrift.

436 EXT. WHARF - RESTING CLOUD - TYPHOON ***

The hawsers on the permanently moored ship snap one by one, and the typhoon sends her out adrift and helpless. The wind and waves pick her up and send her like a giant projectile directly toward Thunder Cloud. She hits Thunder Cloud violently and directly amidships.

437 EXT. BRIDGE - THUNDER CLOUD - TYPHOON ***

where Cullum and Orlov are knocked down by the collision.

438 EXT. HULL OF THUNDER CLOUD - TYPHOON ***

as water gushes through a jagged hole in her side.

439 EXT. BRIDGE - THUNDER CLOUD - TYPHOON ***

as Cullum, knowing Tess is below, climbs to his feet and struggles to the gangway.

ORLOV
Wait! Don't go below until we know our damage -- !

But Cullum ignores him, and plunges down the gangway.

440 INT. GANGWAY - THUNDER CLOUD - TYPHOON

Cullum falls most of the way down the steps, fights his way to a cabin door. He pounds on it.

CULLUM
Tess -- ! Tess -- !

(CONTINUED)

440 CONTINUED:

No answer. He tries to open it. It seems locked or jammed. He kicks it open. Water rushes past him.

441 INT. CABIN - THUNDER CLOUD - TYPHOON

Tess has been knocked unconscious by the collision and is drowning in the water-logged cabin. Cullum gets to her, picks her up. She gasps for air. Relieved, he carries her out of the cabin.

442 EXT. BRIDGE - THUNDER CLOUD - TYPHOON ***

Orlov is yelling.

ORLOV
All watches on deck! Man the pumps! All watches on deck....

443 INT. WHEELHOUSE - SCARLET WITCH - TYPHOON ***

Brock holds himself steady, peering through the shattered windows of the wheelhouse, while the ship bucks and bounces like a wild horse. Then, suddenly, it becomes calm. The wind stops. It becomes relatively quiet. He breathes deeply.

444 INT. SITTING ROOM - HONG KONG HOUSE - DAY

as the wind continues to die down, and the roar diminishes to a growl and then to a whisper. In each other's arms, Dirk and May-May look at each other.

MAY-MAY
(uncertainly)
Is it really over?

DIRK
Maybe. It might be only the vortex.

MAY-MAY
Don't make funny talk. The what?

DIRK
The eye of the storm, the quiet center ---

(CONTINUED)

444 CONTINUED:

Even before he has finished, the wind has begun again, growing louder quickly. In a moment it reaches its roaring crescendo again, and then grows even louder, more menacing.

DIRK
I love you. Don't be afraid....

MAY-MAY
No, never. Not when I'm with you....

She tilts her face to his, and he kisses her. The wind rises higher, insane, furious. There is a screech of tortured nails, as the roof is torn off and blown away.

445 EXT. GARDEN - TYPHOON ***

as the great typhoon wind picks up the entire house, carries it into the air like a toy, and smashes it against the hillside.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

446 EXT. HARBOR - DAY - FULL SHOT ***

The typhoon is over. The sun shines as always, the sky and sea are blue. The ships swing peacefully at anchor, only the wrecked junks and sampans on the beach showing the effects of the storm.

447 EXT. BRIDGE - BRITISH FLAGSHIP - DAY

The Admiral, Longstaff, Horatio, Glessing, some officers. The Admiral is elated.

ADMIRAL
Look at it, by God! Only one frigate damaged, and she can be repaired in a week. A few merchantmen bumped about, and some native junks sunk, but you can't help that. Worst bloody typhoon I've ever seen, and the best bloody harbor in the world. Well done, Longstaff....

(CONTINUED)

447 CONTINUED:

LONGSTAFF
(not yet fully recovered)
Thank you, Admiral. Rather lucky we had the typhoon, I suppose. In a way....

448 thru 451 A SERIES OF SHOTS

of life returning to both Chinatown and Queenstown:

Sampans and junks are fishing in the calm harbor among the flotsam of broken boats and debris.

Some fires are still burning in the Chinese town, but beneath the pall of smoke there is the hum of industry as the inhabitants patch up their homes and hovels, do business, and cook and eat their meals in the narrow streets.

In the ruins of Queenstown, too, people are surveying their homes and shops, some still standing, others only remnants and shells. Traders are supervising gangs of coolies, salvaging possessions, making repairs.

Armed sailors and marines are on guard against looting.

Hong Kong is picking itself up, brushing itself off, and going back to business as usual.

452 EXT. HONG KONG GARDEN - DAY

On a bier made from the remains of the garden benches, the bodies of Dirk and May-May lie, covered by a tattered banner of the Noble House.

Cullum sits nearby, dazed, coming to grips with the fact that the vital force he has known lies dead a few feet away. Tess stands beside him, wanting to comfort him, but unsure of herself. Both of them show the effects of the previous day.

Some distance away, Gordon, Orlov and Quance stand, each alone in his private grief.

453 BROCK

comes up the hillside to the garden. He knows. And the

(CONTINUED)

453 CONTINUED:

knowledge that his ancient enemy is dead seems to increase his size and strength. Today, free of Dirk Struan at last, he feels like a giant.

454 thru 456 EXT. GARDEN

as Brock comes into it. He looks at them all, Tess dropping her eyes before his steely parental glance, and then he goes to where Dirk and May-May lie. He lifts the flag, looks down at them for a long moment, savoring his victory. Then,

BROCK
(with a touch of surprise)
They be lucky. They look like they be asleep more than anything else. Must have been quick....

He drops the flag back over them, and then comes over to Cullum and Tess, instinctively and unquestioningly taking command.

BROCK
I'll have him buried. I always said I would -- but I'll do it right and proper.

Cullum looks up at him sharply, but Brock ignores him, and turns to Gordon.

BROCK
Thee, bastard, thee'll do what's necessary for the Chinese bint.

Gordon's eyes flash hate, but he says nothing.

Everyone is watching Brock, big, strong, sure of himself, in full authority. He looks now at Cullum and Tess.

BROCK
Thee married without my permission, but there's no going back. So, thee, Cullum, will be taking the place of my son Gorth. Thee'll work hard, and thee'll earn thy keep, and thy wife's, and thee'll give me grandchildren. There's a new Noble House now, the House of Brock and Struan...Come, we'll be going aboard Scarlet Witch now....

(CONTINUED)

454 CONTINUED:
thru
456 Cullum is overwhelmed by his sheer strength and self-confidence, as Brock takes Tess by the arm, and turns away. It never occurs to Tess to do anything but obey him.

Gordon and Orlov are both looking at Cullum in despair.

Quance, all too sober now, is looking on, bright-eyed cynical, sardonic, as Cullum finds himself getting up, and following his wife and her father. They leave the bier of Dirk and May-May behind.

457 HORATIO

comes into the garden, bedraggled but urgent, unaware of any tensions. He reaches Brock, Tess and Cullum.

HORATIO
Ah -- Cullum!...The Governor sends his deep regrets about your father, and he wants you to come aboard the flagship immediately.

BROCK
Go on, then. But mind thee be on time for supper.

QUANCE'S VOICE
(suddenly)
I say -- Tai-Pan ---

Both Brock and Cullum turn toward:

458 QUANCE

completely aware of what he is doing.

QUANCE
Could you possibly lend me four hundred and fifty pounds?

459 GROUP SHOT
thru
463 everyone looking at Quance, as he goes on, speaking directly and definitely to Cullum.

(CONTINUED)

459 CONTINUED:
thru
463

QUANCE
I know it's a terrible moment, Tai-Pan, with your father lying there dead, but that miserable Fotheringill bitch says she'll throw me into debtor's prison if I don't pay her. I've got no one to turn to but you.

CULLUM
(grappling with it)
You're speaking to me -- ? You called me Tai-Pan -- ?

QUANCE
Well, you are, aren't you?

There is a pregnant beat. Gordon and Orlov are tense, Horatio and Tess puzzled, Brock annoyed. Cullum takes a deep breath. Then Brock snorts, and jerks Tess along with him.

BROCK
Come on -- !

Cullum sees Gordon, Orlov, Quance all looking at him. His head clears. His blood races. He turns toward Brock and Tess, walking away from him.

CULLUM
(sharply)
Stand where you are!...And let go of my wife.

Brock turns in surprise and disbelief. Cullum puts out his open hand to Orlov.

CULLUM
Captain ---

Orlov understands. Elated, he takes the knife from his waist and slaps it into Cullum's hand.

CULLUM
(quietly)
I'm waiting for you to take your hand off my wife....

(CONTINUED)

459 thru 463 CONTINUED: (2)

Brock goes red with rage and surprise. He glares at Cullum, younger and perhaps not as strong but certainly faster, and sees the determination in his face, the willingness to die if necessary, and the unwavering knife in his grip, and, behind Cullum, Gordon and Orlov. And to one side, Quance, all innocence, and Horatio, bewildered, but both witnesses to anything that happens now. For the first time, Brock suddenly feels exposed and alone, and with that sense of isolation a sickening loss of confidence. A moment more passes, and then he lets go of Tess.

CULLUM
Come here, Tess....

She throws Brock a quick look, half-sympathetic, half-defiant, and hurries to Cullum's side.

CULLUM
Horatio, tell the Governor I can't make it today. Perhaps he'll have breakfast with me tomorrow - aboard Thunder Cloud.

HORATIO
(confused)
If you say so....

He backs away, and goes.

CULLUM
(to Orlov)
Orlov, from today, you're Flag Captain of my fleet. For now, please escort Mrs. Struan aboard my ship...Gordon, meet me in an hour. We'll arrange a double funeral, because, of course, they must be together...And then you and I have business to discuss... Quance, see me in the morning. I'll have your money then.

Gordon, Quance and Orlov find themselves speaking independently but at the same time.

GORDON, QUANCE, ORLOV
Yes, Tai-Pan....

Cullum turns to Brock.

(CONTINUED)

459 thru 463 CONTINUED: (3)

CULLUM
There's only one Noble House, and that's the House of Struan....

He reaches in his pocket, and brings up a handful of coins.

CULLUM
You know what these are for ---

Deliberately, he tosses them at Brock's feet. Brock looks down at them, and then at Cullum, understanding now the pattern of the future, and that nothing has changed. There is to be no dictated peace. Then, without a parting glance at Tess, he turns and strides away. Orlov raises his hook in a gesture of farewell, repaid at last. Tess looks after her father unhappily. Cullum sees and understands her mixed feelings.

CULLUM
(gently)
Don't be sad, girl. And go with Captain Orlov now...I'll be with you soon. I want to be alone for a while, with my father, and his wife....

He kisses her cheek, and she goes obediently with Orlov.

Quance follows them. Only the two brothers are left. Cullum and Gordon exchange a long look, then grim smiles. Then Gordon goes.

Cullum stands alone, sharply outlined against the red, sunset sky. He looks down at the knife in his hand, knowing it will remain there for the rest of his days, unless and until he is willing to let it be taken from him. The knife is a part of him now, and he is a part of it. And he remembers:

DIRK'S VOICE
(as in Sc. 167-169)
You'll never know what it's like until you're Tai-Pan, and that you'll never be unless you're willing to risk -- everything...Do you want it, the wealth and the glory, and the power...?

(CONTINUED)

459 thru 463 CONTINUED: (4)

CULLUM

Yes.

Because now, for good or evil, for triumph or failure, he is Tai-Pan.

SHORT FADE OUT

FADE IN:

464 TITLE:

THE END OF TAI-PAN

PART ONE.

THEN THE CREDIT AND END TITLES APPEAR, OVER SCENES OF CROWDED, BUSY, MODERN HONG KONG TODAY, PULSING WITH ENERGY, ALIVE, HUNGRY, VIBRANT, RICH, GATEWAY TO GREAT CHINA ACROSS THE BAY....

FADE OUT TITLES

FADE IN:

A brief epilogue: OVER a MONTAGE of past and future shots of Mary Sinclair, as prostitute, and with Glessing and Horatio; of Shevaun and Cooper and Cullum; of Longstaff, Jin-Qua and Orlov; of Fong and the other Triad leader; of Gordon; of Brock; of Tess and Cullum, and of the three remaining half-coins, still to be redeemed...THE TITLE:

PART TWO OF TAI-PAN WILL BE SHOWN IN THIS THEATRE NEXT YEAR.

-o-